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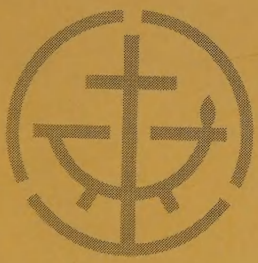

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MARTYRIA:

A Legend,

WHEREIN ARE CONTAINED

HOMILIES, CONVERSATIONS, AND INCIDENTS

OF THE REIGN OF EDWARD THE SIXTH.

WRITTEN BY

WILLIAM MOUNTFORD, CLERK.

FIRST AMERICAN EDITION, WITH AN INTRODUCTION.

BOSTON:

WM. CROSBY AND H. P. NICHOLS,

118 WASHINGTON STREET.

1846.

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

AMERICAN EDITION.

It is believed by those persons that have read 'Martyria' in the London Edition, that it should be brought within the easier reach of readers in this country generally. It deserves republication and acquaintance better than most books. Its high conceptions of duty, its beautiful lessons of morality, faith, forgiveness, prayer, self-denial, make it worthy the study of all whose aim it is to grow in the Christian life. The pure elegance and often the condensed energy of its style must claim the admiration of every scholar. It is quite remarkable how successfully the writer has carried himself back to the age he describes, breathed the very atmosphere that embraced those distant scenes, and imbued himself so thoroughly with the antique spirit of the period, that it would seem as if he had taken the peculiar method from no other hand than that of Nature herself. The depth of spiritual meaning, the intellectual insight, the classic gracefulness of the execution, claim, each, in the highest degree, a studious attention. It might be difficult to refer to a work, in Modern Literature at least, where, within the same compass, are to be found more passages that stir the heart and cling to the memory. The standard of magnanimity, heroism and generosity is placed at a wonderfully

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lofty point, and a temper of genuine sympathy for all the solemn and joyful experiences of humanity makes the whole genial. The strain of devotion that pervades the volume is contemplative, thoughtful, serious; or else it would not have the sublimity of true devotion. But it is cheerful too, with a cheerfulness that is gained only through great struggles, and peaceful, with a peace that 'the world cannot give nor take away.' — For examples of calm instruction and profound feeling, we may be permitted to refer especially to the elevated conversations of Farel and Brandon, and of these with Jane Bouchier, the 'Apologue' ascribed to the latter, the Discourse of Master Asheton on the worth and love of life, and the Introductory Chapter. A specimen of able theological discussion occurs in the Chapter on the History of Early Opinions respecting the Trinity. The fallacy of the Papal claim of Undivided Unity, and the inevitableness of the alternative between conscience and a Supreme and Infallible Ecclesiastical Head, are also forcibly exhibited. The adaptation of the author's course of thought to the times of which he writes is often equally delicate and striking. Conceive, for instance, the strict and refined sentiments of Master Asheton's Homily on Marriage preached to an age that had witnessed the notorious career of the sensualist, and all but polygamist, Henry VIII.

Perhaps we cannot better perform the office of introducing this volume to the American public, than by giving a brief statement of the position of ecclesiastical affairs in that important era of English history which it illustrates.

It was in A. D. 1534, that it was declared by Act of Parliament that 'the crown of England was imperial,' that there should henceforth be no appeal to Rome 'in cases spiritual as well as temporal,' and thus the suprem-

acy of the Crown was formally substituted for that of Rome. Already Henry had virtually asserted his independence of the Papal See, by deserting Catharine of Arragon in 1531, and by marrying Ann Boleyn in 1532, — just ten years after he had earned and received from Leo the title of 'Defender of the Faith,' for his celebrated work against Luther and Protestantism. There can be no doubt that many causes combined to create a comparative readiness for change in the minds of many of his subjects, and to prepare the way for the Reformation in England. Few things appear to the thoughtful student of the religious developement of different nations more remarkable, than the certainty with which the rising religious wants of a people are met and ministered to, by the course of all related concerns. But still, a movement owing so large a share of its origin and impulse as this did, to the selfish designs of a single individual on the throne, could not reasonably be expected to exhibit a very regular progress, or to have that steady and efficient force which is secured only under the guidance of comprehensive principles. Accordingly, in the early years of the Reform, we find palpable contradictions even in the public expressions of faith put forth after the most weighty deliberations, and under the most solemn sanctions. The first Confession of the Church of England after the rupture with Rome was drawn up by the Convocation that sat in 1536, and approved by the king. The articles required belief in the Whole Bible and the three Creeds (Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian); enjoined three sacraments, of Baptism, Penance, and the Altar, neglecting the other four sacraments of the Romish Church entirely; forbade the direct worship of images; threw the subject of Purgatory into an extremely dubious and perplexing attitude; and sanctioned praying to the Saints, sprinkling holy water, bearing can-

dles on Candlemas Day, and palms on palm-Sunday, and various exorcisms and benedictions. In the same year the 'Injunctions about religion,' proclaimed by the royal authority, exhorted the people to teach their children the Lord's prayer, the creed and the ten commandments, in English. In the year following, however, according to Strype, was commenced the preparation of the 'Bishops' Book,' otherwise called 'The Godly and Pious Institution of a Christian Man,' and as completed in 1540 'The King's Book,' or 'A necessary Doctrine and Erudition of any Christian Man.' Whether these two titles should be considered as designating two distinct works, or different editions of the same work, they are at any rate both applied to productions flagrantly inconsistent with the articles of '36. They require faith not only in the three sacraments retained before, but in the other four, Extreme Unction, Matrimony, Administration of Orders, and Confirmation, — though this last was admitted not to be essential. A more rigorously Romanist character was also impressed on two of the other three Sacraments, for Penance was placed in the absolution of the Priest, and in the Eucharist not only was the corporal presence asserted, but the 'concomitancy of the blood with the flesh,' so that communion in both kinds was dispensed with. A similar retreat towards Rome was evinced by the 'Six Articles,' carried through both Houses of Parliament in June 1539, in which, among other traces of Catholic doctrines, Priests were forbidden to marry, auricular confession was declared 'expedient and necessary,' and transubstantiation was insisted on. But the most alarming and arbitrary feature of these articles is indicated by the style under which they were passed, — 'An Act for abolishing diversity of opinions in certain Articles concerning Christian Religion.' The public

services of devotion were conducted partly in English and partly in Latin.

These advances and retrogressions were not rare in those days. The royal pleasure ran in a most devious channel. At one moment it decreed that the Scriptures should be spread before the body of the people, at another it virtually rescinded that decree, for, as one historian significantly observes, 'it seemed very difficult to reconcile the king's model for uniformity with the permission of free inquiry.' It stirred up rebellions in the North by its inclination to Protestantism, and bred discontents about London by its concessions to Popery. It convulsed the kingdom by a violent dissolution of abbeys and suppression of monasteries in 1537 and '38, and in 1539 obtained an Act declaring the very service for which these Institutions were chiefly valuable, the offering of Masses for the Dead, — to have a Holy, Sacramental efficacy. In its dealing with theological concerns we discern that disgusting fickleness which, in other departments of life, could lavish an equal affection on Jane Seymour and Catharine Howard, and condemn the aspiring and nobleminded Surrey to the same penalty that was affixed to the loathsome crimes of the Maid of Kent. In fact, Henry's despotism, as has been remarked, is shown by nothing more clearly than by his compelling the passage, in council, of articles which simply expressed his own mixed and confused creed, while probably not one member of that body, and Hume says not one person in the whole kingdom, believed them. The awful execution of Ann Ascue, spoken of in this 'Legend' as the friend of 'Emma,' with all the revolting circumstances attending it, and of Balenian, Lassels and Adams, was probably owing as much to Henry's vanity and impatience of contradiction as to any more important cause. The doctrine of transubstantiation

was one of the few fixed articles in the king's code, as it has been one of the last relics of Romanism to be ejected from the English Establishment. In view of the royal influence on the religious condition of this period, perhaps old 'John Vance' may be regarded by some as not utterly astray when he is made by our author to exclaim, 'This Church of England is the offspring of his late Majesty's wickedness.' Yet we should err miserably were we to fail of discerning even here the working of that Omnipotent Control which never deserts the truth of Christ, and which turns to sacred uses the most untoward events and which accomplishes beautiful results through the most unseemly instruments.

After Henry was succeeded by his amiable son, in 1547, and coming nearer now to the time when the scenes of 'Martyria' open, we see the general posture of Ecclesiastical affairs improved. Some of the questions turning on the former popish customs continued to agitate the public mind — such as those pertaining to the use of 'holy water,' images and other ceremonies,— and many melancholy facts attest that the rules of conformity were but vaguely understood in some quarters, and yielded to only after stubborn resistance in others. The general feeling was that the main obstacle in the way of the Reformation was removed, and that the Catholic party must for the present succumb. The Earl of Hertford, immediately created Duke of Somerset, and Protector, in Edward's minority, had a decided leaning to Protestantism. Hence it is, that interest is so easily made for 'Young Thomas Tobey,' in the story, with 'My Lady Duchess, the Lord Protector's wife.' The absence of veneration, in the Protector, for the old structures, is hinted at in Chapter II. of this work. The allusion is to a costly palace built by Somerset in the Strand. He demolished the church of St Mary and three bishops'

houses to make room for this edifice; and then having attempted to destroy St Margaret's, to procure materials for his design, and his workmen being prevented by the indignant populace, he tore down, for the same purpose, a church of St John, and a chapel, cloister and charnel-house in St Paul's churchyard. It is said that he sacrilegiously defaced the tombs and monuments, and disturbed the rest of many human bones.

How deep the feelings of the youthful king himself were against Papacy and in favor of 'the new learning' appears from the sincere and profound grief experienced by his gentle nature for the resolute adherence of his sister Mary to her mother's faith. While the council at Trent were toiling to strengthen the Romish yoke, the Protestants of England were rejoicing in the repeal of the odious 'Six Articles.' The mass was abolished, and the Sacrament of the Communion in bread and wine was substituted. The laws against the Lollards were rescinded. In 1552 was adopted the Second Service Book, or Book of Common Prayer, the same essentially with that which still continues in use in the Establishment. The entire Liturgy was translated. Unfortunately, uniformity was required, and severe penalties were affixed to dissent. Foreigners of liberal minds, embarrassed at home, now sought refuge in England as in an Asylum of free thought. Martin Bucer, Fagius and Peter Martyr, took part in theological discussions. And it is recorded that there were Protestant congregations in London, not only Dutch, but Spanish, Polish, and Italian. Surely, exclaims a worthy chronicler, 'the Reformation was under a particular and watchful care of Providence. When the light seemed almost extinguished in one place it broke out in another, by which, as it was still kept shining somewhere, so there was a sanctuary opened to which those who were forced to fly

might find a covert from the storm. In the beginning of this reign, the Reformation seemed to be near extinguished in Germany. In this church it was at that time advanced, and we kindly then received those who were forced to fly hither for shelter. And now, in the year before the death of this good king, there was not only a revival but a lasting settlement procured in Germany to the Reformation there. So that those who fled from hence found a safe and kind harbor in all the places of the Empire.'

While the momentous strife was thus going on between the principles that lay at the foundation of the Church of England and the Papal Despotism, it concerns us to observe what other forms of Christian faith appeared, and what fortunes attended them, even where the atmosphere was most stirred by inquiry. The materials afforded for such an investigation during the period in question were few; and doubtless for the reason that whatever systems of dissenting opinion existed presented no imposing front. We know indeed that the spirit of Wycliffe left marks on the mind of his age which a century had not wholly effaced. The Lollards still chanted in their rude way their fervent and often fanatical devotions, in many corners of Germany and England. These Scripturalists met with the contempt of the advocates of High Church Authority, the persecution of Henry, but the toleration of Edward. The Anabaptists with their innocent peculiarity gained little else but anathemas, and whatever Arian element lurked among them, shared not less fully in the reproach. The age of Arminianism in England had not yet come. The Calvinistic tendency and the Socinian tendency, had both for a long time enough to do without measuring their strength together, though there could be no dispute that the former was far more prevalent than the latter. On the Continent, the impulse

given to free inquiry by Luther had already carried some individuals to convictions whose simplicity and truth the world does not even yet acknowledge.

It is curious that amidst these tempestuous commotions, should have appeared the first motions of Unitarian life in England.* Yet it was undoubtedly so, and our author is right in giving us this beautiful and touching picture of the moral strength and sweetness of spirit and humble devotion, that it manifested. It is true, Unitarianism did not make much show of controversy till it was espoused by John Biddle and Thomas Firmin, in the course of the succeeding century, when it had become widely diffused; and even those persons mixed much with their opinions that was wholly strange to Unitarian Christianity. That system awaited a more eloquent exposition and a more evangelical and able defence, at the hands of scholars and thinkers of an age more suited to its developement. But in the times of the Reformation, the denial of the Trinity could not be tolerated. Both the 'Forty-two Articles,' referred to above, and the 'Digest of Ecclesiastical Laws' (in fifty one *titles*,— a number chosen, says Burnet, to bring it near the number of the books of the Pandects into which Justinian had digested the Roman Law) of 1552, begin with an assertion of the doctrine of the Trinity.† Of course then, George Van Paris, and Jane Bocher (or Bouchier) acknowledged Arians, must suffer, and all the historians record their executions, though none so beautifully as our author. Hume relates that Van Paris 'suffered with so much satisfaction, that he hugged and caressed the faggots that were consuming him.' It would seem

* 'Martyria' was first published at Glasgow, in the Christian Pioneer, and a part of the title is 'Early Unitarian Times.'

† See Burnet, History of Reformation, Part II. Book I.

that there were other Arian Martyrs in Queen Mary's reign following; and even in the days of William and Mary, the Toleration Act that extended its benefits to Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists and Quakers, withheld them from deniers of the Trinity.

With reference to the 'Brandons,' it may be well to remind the reader that one of the friends to whom Henry VIII. was most firmly attached was Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. 'The chief favorite in the King's pleasure,' writes Bishop Burnet, 'was Charles Brandon, a gallant, graceful person, one of the strongest men of the age, and so a fit match for the king at his jousts and tiltings, which was the manly diversion of that time.' This Duke of Suffolk, who died in 1545 or '46, married Mary, sister of Henry, then Queen Dowager of France; and the children of these parents were distinguished in Henry's will, by being preferred, in the succession of the crown, to the Scottish line. Frances Brandon, Marchioness of Dorset, and Eleanor, Countess of Cumberland, were appointed the fourth and fifth heirs. In a note of Burnet it is further stated that the fourth wife of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, was Catharine, daughter of William, the last Lord Willoughby of Eresby. It would appear that thus might come Willoughby Brandon, whom the author seems to represent as a relative of the Duke.

If there is anything in this volume from which an impartial student of character and of history should be anxious to withold his assent, perhaps it is the representation it gives of that conspicuous actor in these scenes of the Reformation, Archbishop Cranmer. Although grave charges are not very formally preferred against him, nor any terms of harsh denunciation applied to his policy, yet perhaps the language employed leaves a too unfavor-

able impression of the man. It cannot be denied that he gave his sanction to certain measures which, if consummated in our day, or even viewed in our light, would hardly admit of a very satisfactory apology. But there are few characters developed in the whole progress of human events, which could safely challenge a trial, on every point, by the standard of a much later time, or appear spotless when scrutinised through the improved medium of a moral atmosphere cleansed by the inquiry, effort, and thought of ages better than their own. To subject them to such a process would be little better than the very intolerance which, in this instance, forms one of the grounds of accusation. A generous charity will not allow us to require of great and good men that they should anticipate the attainments reached only through the struggles of three hundred years.

Going back then to Cranmer's day, placing ourselves amidst the difficulties and perplexities, the harassing conflicts and dangerous cabals that encompassed him, must we not admire the general freedom from the worst species of reproach with which he pursued his ends, and the success with which he wrought them out, during so long a period? He was obliged to deal with an imperious, self-willed, obstinate sovereign, and on the very subjects where his caprice was most notorious and his pride most sensitive. And though the courtiers who found in him an obstacle to their schemes, vented their hatred by stigmatising him with the offensive title of a 'Henrician,' yet he deserved the opprobrium far less than many others who really bent the neck of a more cringing and base servility to Henry, but through some weakness or mismanagement failed, deservedly enough, to retain his favor. Cranmer's sincerity cannot reasonably be questioned; nor can it be doubted, on the other hand, that this trait was more remark-

able in him than independence or courage. Melancholy as it is to find him yielding an apparent connivance at the execution of Lambert, yet if we admit what was hardly called in question then, the right of persecution in any case, then we must see that he could find his defence in his care to guard his favorite Reform doctrines from the odium of being carried to extremes. His very attachment to the new principles would render him the more jealous to save them from the obloquy of being abused; for, as Hume asserts, the Catholics were ready to triumph at every latitudinarian speculation, insisting that 'the moment men departed from the authority of the Church, they lost all criterion of truth and falsehood, in matters of religion, and must be carried away by every wind of doctrine.' He would be as suspicious of Lambert, Frith, and Bilney, on the one hand, as of Gardiner and Bonner on the other. And though the former might be conscious of only following out to their legitimate consequences the inquiries which Cranmer had helped to throw open, it would be as fair to ascribe that to the greater persistency of their minds and force of their logic, as to a superior moral integrity. The historical facts of those times require either a most acute discrimination or else a very comprehensive charity. The amiable Sir Thomas More, purer, perhaps, to our eyes, than any of his cotemporaries, proved in his treatment of James Bainham, that he did not consider the work of persecution as too vile for his hands. Besides, let those who are eager to condemn the Archbishop for what countenance he gave to such cruelties, remember that whoever writes impartially the religious annals of our own days will be obliged to record acts of bigotry quite as shameful to the culture of the nineteenth century, as were Cranmer's severities to the fifteenth.

It is true, Cranmer's opinion on the affair of Catharine

of Arragon coincided with the humour of the king. It was his advice to refer the question to the Universities of Europe, that first attracted to him the royal favor, while he was yet a fellow of Jesus' College, thus drawing him from the quiet shades of learning into the most troubled scenes of that stormy epoch. But that advice does not wear the character of sycophantic accommodation to a vicious monarch's prejudices. It was in perfect keeping with Cranmer's well-known and uniform principles. It was virtually an appeal from the Pontificate to the Scriptures, and thus a denial of the Supremacy of Rome, and an assertion of the great Protestant idea. For the consequences of that appeal, Cranmer could not surely be held responsible.

Nor is he chargeable with bad faith in taking the oath enjoined by the Papal See, on assuming the Primacy of the realm. It appears that he accepted this preferment with great reluctance, coming from Germany, where he then was, 'very slowly,' 'hoping that the king's thoughts cooling, some other person might step in between him and that dignity.' He could conscientiously assure himself that the opinions he really entertained were not kept back from His Holiness, for they had been published in his disputation in 'many Courts of Christendom.' If his opinions underwent some change after that act, such a change implies of course, no guilt. And if it be said that he had scruples at the moment, which ought to have prevented him from taking office under the Pope, then the answer is that he made room for those scruples by a definite protest, securing the reservation of his fealty to the Crown, the Establishment, and his Country. This protest having been made first in St Stephen's chapel previous to his consecration, 'he afterwards repeated it,' says Burnet, 'when he gave his oath to the Pope, by which, if he did not

wholly save his integrity, yet it was plain he intended no cheat but to act fairly and above board.'

The rupture with Rome having come, at the divorce of Catharine, his adherence henceforth to Protestantism was permanent, manifest and decided. He was ever found on the side of Reform, and he seized on every occasion for suggesting to the unsteady mind of the king, such measures as would promote the interests of that cause. He kept a vigilant eye open on every avenue for the introduction of his ideas. The Romanising Bishops might flatter and extort from the Crown concessions favorable to the ancient Ecclesiastical administration, they might drive Tyndale, Coverdale and Rogers to the Continent for a peaceful retreat wherein to prepare their translation of the Holy Scriptures; they might prohibit and burn every copy of that translation which those sturdy scholars sent back to England, but Cranmer and Cromwell, assiduous though cautious at their posts, would in due time elicit from the royal authority permission to publish an English Bible of their own, and set up a copy in every parish church in the kingdom. 'Cranmer's Great Bible,' of 1539, was but a reproduction of Matthews', and through that was founded on Tyndale's, Coverdale's, and Rogers'. It was one of these Bibles, thus fastened in a church, that 'Maud' in the following story, describes herself as going one day to study. And thus, with a temporary restriction imposed by one of Henry's whims, confining the reading of the Scriptures to 'gentle folks,' the Book of Life was opened to the great English nation, an immortal privilege, never to be quite relinquished by the Anglo-Saxon race again. On another occasion, when in 1537 the Bishops that leaned towards Rome gained so far on the king as to procure his consent to the statute of the 'Six Articles,' for 'abolishing diversity of opinions &c.,' already referred to, so inter-

posing a check to the progress of Reform principles, the Primate was willing to incur the royal displeasure, by an earnest remonstrance,—no very safe procedure towards a tyrant of so impatient and fiery a temper. He did not indeed, like Shaxton (whose disposition seems not to have mingled sweetness with decision) and Latimer, resign his bishoprick, because he felt undoubtedly that a great work remained to be accomplished by him in the important position Providence had suffered him hitherto to hold. When the bill finally passed, 'The king desired the archbishop to go out of the House, since he could not give his consent to it; but he humbly excused himself, for he thought he was bound in conscience to stay and vote against it.' We should not lay too much stress on the friendship of such a man as Henry VIII., and yet it is not without admiration that we see Cranmer, when a few years after he was beset by wily foes, and exposed to pressing perils, yet confronting his adversaries, defeating their accusations, and retaining his place in his sovereign's regard. Henry required the hostile Duke of Norfolk and other members of the Council, to embrace the Primate, in token of their satisfaction and reconciliation.

If on the accession of Edward VI., and the new encouragement to Protestant principles held out by that transfer of the Crown, Cranmer showed more distinctly than ever before his predilections for the Reformation, it was not that the change in the occupancy of the throne *made* him more truly Protestant, but it afforded his timid spirit an opportunity to avow his real and cherished opinions, and to carry forward measures that he had long desired to introduce.

The author of this work has done well to compare the sad contradictions that marked the Primate's closing days, with the no less painful recantations of 'Master Asheton.'

There are diversities of noble gifts; and neither he, nor any other high-minded writer would set down the inconsistent stammerings of a hunted and affrighted soul, sensitive perhaps and with a native shrinking from pain, wrung too by that fear of death which with most of us is a feeling too mighty to allow us to make its annihilation a test of Christian rectitude,— as a disgrace deep enough to counterbalance all the excellence of a holy and self-denying life. The tortures and confusion of the final trial should have their part in explaining the incoherencies of the mind's latest motions and expressions, — whether of repentance or abjuration. It would have been far grander, indeed, if both these earnest Reformers had never wavered. We may believe that then they would have had loftier seats in the Kingdom of Heaven, and their names would then have brightened forever with the glory of the bravest confessors. Let us not, in taking them for what they were, yield them less than their great due. Nor would it be amiss for us to weigh well the atonement that Cranmer made when he held up that right hand, crisped and slowly burning in the flames, and to ask ourselves as we despise the fault, whether we could dare to burn out the stain by a like sacrifice.

If we were attempting a general palliation of the imperfections that attached to this Martyr's career, we might inquire what we have a right to expect from men formed under the influences of that corrupt age, and associated with such companions as acted the prominent parts on the stage of that sanguinary reign; when the blood of the servants of Christ was shed as if it were one of the streams appointed by Heaven to be perennial; when the hinges of the Tower gate were creaking continually at the reception of fresh victims of both civil and ecclesiastical despotism; when, on the side of politics,

the Privy Council must often acknowledge a 'Sir Marmaduke Nelson' as a type of its *better class*, and, on the side of theology, the 'Forty-two Articles'* decided that whoever should presume to maintain that a Pagan can possibly be saved 'is himself exposed to the penalty of eternal perdition.' On the whole, in view of all that was done in his eventful lifetime, we may probably say safely, in the words of John Strype's quaint Dedication of his 'Memorials,'—'Blessed be God for Archbishop Cranmer.'

But no such general defence is undertaken here, and more has been said in that direction than we at first intended. We are only desirous to guard against anything like an indiscriminate censure of one party, for the sake of exalting into a fairer light, by the contrast, the merits of the other. Those merits are substantial, and may securely abide the test of an unprejudiced examination. The early believers of the simple Unity of God, the Father, were doubtless in earnest, and proved their earnestness under a hard ordeal. But we can admire all their singleness of mind, and be lifted up by their serene faith, without throwing their high qualities against the dark background of their persecutors' intolerance. They are not the freest and strongest spirits, that are ever complaining at the exclusiveness that has followed their opinions, the cruel fate that has attended their sect. The most devoted and most resistless apostles are those that do not linger much among personal considerations, nor dwell dolorously on the vexed lot that befalls their ideas, but look steadfastly at Truth, at Right, and into the promising Future.

If none had suffered for the faith that we profess, should we not almost doubt whether it is from Heaven?

* Art. XVIII. See Burnet's Collection of Records, No. LV.

Great truths are not planted without great sacrifices. If none of that 'seed of the church' 'the blood of martyrs,' is sown, how can we look for the harvest? Take the contrary supposition, and one of the Saviour's beatitudes might have remained unspoken.

In the name of many American readers we venture to assure the author of these pages that their appreciation of the large conceptions of humanity, the intellectual beauty, and the Christian purity of feeling, that enrich his work, is like gratitude for the bestowment of a personal kindness.

F. D. H.

Boston, March, 1846.

MARTYRIA:

OR

EARLY UNITARIAN TIMES.

CHAPTER I.

If life be time, that here is spent,
And time on earth be cast away;
Whoso his time hath here mispent,
Hath hastened his own dying day.
So it doth prove a killing crime,
To massacre our living time.

J. Hoskyns.

Thomas Erpingham was a horologer, dwelling nigh to London Bridge, in the year of grace 1548. He was an enthusiastic artist, and among his companions warmly exalted the dignity of his science, above that of all the other mysteries and crafts of the city-companies. He maintained that horology was in some sense, a religious art. Inside his shop, there were painted on the wall, in golden letters, surrounded with sundry appropriate devices, these words from Matthew Tyndal's Bible —

Teache us so to number our dayes, that we may apply our hearts unto wisedome.

And always, when a ghostly customer came, whether he were a favourer of the old or the new learning, would Thomas Erpingham hint at his own, as remotely allied to the clerkly profession, using the while, reverential and becoming speech, as it were beseeching his listener's assent. In a turret, on the roof of his house, the horologist had placed a clock, in part to publish his craft, but mainly for the spiritual edification of his neighbours. By his inquiries from the city-sextons he had ascertained the daily mortality of the metropolis; and very diligent he was in disseminating the information — so that all his friends might understand the precise intensity of the warning, which his clock struck through the neighborhood every hour.

Many of Thomas Erpingham's acquaintance denied all connection between the dial and godliness, much to his annoyance. But such perverseness is not rare. The Scandinavians heard nothing terrible in the thunder; they thought it was noise made by their northen gods, while playing at bowls. The trifling make all things frivolous; else, in these times, a house-clock might be more suggestive of piety than any household god ever was. It is not destitute of sublime associations. All the first chronometers appear to have been sacerdotal inventions, always excepting that earliest and holiest, the sidereal one. The first measurement of time was a divine ordinance; for it was God who said,

on the fourth morning of creation, 'Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.' The figures on the dial correspond with solar attitudes: in Venice, the circumference of its face is the sun's course in miniature; and everywhere the swing of the pendulum regulates the footfall of time, and the stealthy pace also of the last enemy, which is death. It is a good horological motto, 'there is a time for all things;' and, like Ecclesiastes, in his list of twenty-eight particulars, it is good to enumerate in the very first clause, 'a time to die.' But in this forethought most mortals fail; for commonly, they never recollect a time to die, till the last period of their existence, till they are so diseased and despairing, as that instead of the hours, the clock appears to them to strike the terrific warning, 'Thou fool, this night——'

There is a preacher in the belfry, as well as in the pulpit — unimpassioned but indefatigable. Long buried and fresh corpses lie around him; and across these dead bodies does the iron tongue of time preach to the living audience beyond. All the faces in the church-yard are turned upwards; the spire above them points with its finger into heaven; and often do the tombs echo to the sermon which time preaches out of the tower, especially at the midnight peroration. But there is no attention, nor hearing, nor knowledge in the grave. Under the

church-yard is silence, never to be broken but by the voice of the last trumpet. We all bewail bitterly, and sometimes with an agony of sorrow, the sleep of death; and yet it is but little harder than the sleep of the world, and is not nearly so awful. Wisdom lifteth up her voice in the streets; and is commonly as unheeded, as if the streets were alleys in a grave-yard: and, indeed, they are not unlike. For, in every street, and on either side, many have a name that they live and are dead. Outside the church-yard walls, and throughout every town, there is a worse decay than that of mortality — a more horrible putrescence than the rotting of a corpse — that of the passions in their loathsomeness, that of a soul suffered by its human owner to see corruption. Years before his body has Christian burial, does many a citizen permit a golden grave to be dug for his spirit, and allow Mammon to read diabolical service over his dead and buried conscience. Wretched men that they are! Who shall deliver them from the body of that death? Thank God, there is a Saviour that can! And what does that Saviour say? — 'Watch, therefore, for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh.' Are your eyes heavy with wordly slumber? Think how such slumber may become the sleep of the grave, and shudder at the thought! Think of the encoffined, helpless, and unconscious dead, and thank God that you yourself are yet alive! Think how they lie in the cold

ground, with closed eyes, and faces upturned to the world above! Think how the funeral bell swings above their heads, announcing, from time to time, an addition to their silent numbers; and they neither mourn nor rejoice! From the church-steeple every midnight does Time make proclamation all around, that the world is another day nearer to its doom. But of the buried multitude below none ever hear the terrific notice. To them it is not addressed; for them it is not intended; to them it is of no use. Thou that hast ears to hear, do thou hear!

> 'The bell strikes One. We take no note of time
> But from its loss; to give it then a tongue
> Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,
> I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,
> It is the knell of my departed hours.'

But let us not deem too mournfully of death. Bless God thou canst not? Then beseech grace, that thou mayest bless God for the grave. There the times and the wicked cease from troubling, and the world-weary are at rest. Yes, ye righteous, at the very least ye are at peace! There was once a Pope — it was John the 22d — who was of opinion that, till the end of the world, only the souls of the martyrs enjoy the Beatific Vision. The angry king of France flung his sword into the infallible scales, and the opposite notion was weighted with orthodoxy then. But whether the king or the pope were right, this at least is certain, that the weary are at rest. The lapse of revolutions, and ages, and

centuries, and all time, is to them no more than a moment.

Did God and their salvation permit, there are those who could covet speedy possession of the earth beside you, oh, ye buried and beloved ones! And that not from callousness of feeling, but possibly far otherwise! For there are hearts that long for the grave, as a refuge from the chill, and blight, and coldness of common life.

We may not wish for death; but, God be thanked that the grave is no longer repulsive to us Christians! Thank God, and Christ, the Son of God, for the sure and certain hope, which everywhere springs heavenward from the lowliest grave! The God of the living and the dead likewise be thanked for that power over us survivors, which the departed still retain! There is no object so common, but in our eyes, it acquires some sacredness by its owner's death. 'In memory of the dead'—these are consecrating words of more than episcopal power. Whether in affliction, or out of it, widows and orphans are always subjects of reverence; and it is not as being defenceless merely; spirits have been thought to surround them with their presence. This may be doubted; but certainly the helpless state of the fatherless and the widowed is often their strong defence. Orphanism is spiritual panoply; it is suggestive of such solemn, sacred thoughts, as disarm the cruel, and enlist the feelings of the kind. The very names of the dead are

strengthening. Their memories are tearful, but sweet also and blessed. No flowers, whether gathered at the full or any other moon, have such virtue as the forget-me-nots which grow on the grave of a friend. In any hour of trial, gather but one, and thou wilt find thy agony assuaged, thy passion purified, and through thy whole spirit a peace diffused, congenial, sweet, a blessed earnest of heaven.

Gifted with the glorious gospel of Christ, it is for a divine end, that we have this treasure in earthen vessels. There is wise purpose in the very mortality of that tenement, which is made the receptacle of immortal hope. We spirits enter the universe of life, enveloped in a veil of flesh — frail clothing, weak defence, wherein to withstand stormy elements, and the wear and tear of human life! But its very insufficiency is intended; it has a use. Spiritual strength is wrought out in bodily weakness; Christian worth, like Christ's own self, is made perfect through suffering; and eternal ages can come to be esteemed as true treasure, only by those who have been so taught to number their days, as to apply their hearts unto wisdom.

We are wonderfully made, and fearfully and feebly also! There is no other known way of learning the lessons of nature, — how manifold they are, from minute instruction, up to stupendous revelation! — no other mode of sharing in human experience; no other known medium of thought or feeling, than through the agency of these eyes and

ears, the other senses and the brain. If a disembodied spirit might, in all probability, it could not profit by the world, its wisdom, or its scenes. The soul's salvation depends somewhat on its tenure of the body. We have no longer time for improvement than while we can keep this covering of vile 'members' about us. It is only in contact with earth, that preparation for heaven goes on. The consciousness of mortality is not necessarily depressing. It is given us to infuse earnestness into thought, and into and throughout the soul, a solemn, quickening sense of dependence upon God. Man's feet are created subject to palsy and the deadening effect of old age, that they may take hold of the path of life the more gladly. The right hand may and will forget its cunning; and it is therefore, that whatsoever it findeth to do should be done with the greater might. It is foreknown as the destiny of the noblest head to become the abode of loathsome worms, in order that the human spirit may dwell therein with the more humility. And the heart is contrived liable to ruptures and many diseases, that, towards God, it may throb with the greater awe, and thrill the more tenderly and the more lovingly for men.

Worldly evanescence! It is a religious sentiment, and is true; and is also like godliness, which is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Of these two, which had the greater and the purer happiness

in life? Was it Demas, who loved this present world, as if it were eternal; or was it the apostle, whom he forsook, and in whose sight these things that are seen were so temporal? Was not Paul the happier man, stripes and perils notwithstanding? He was.

The transient is the true view of the world. It is the light in which all things human appear from beside God's throne. Other surveys may be had, and are common enough; but they are false, unhappy, and Satanic. No man thinks too highly of the world, but thinks also too meanly of his own soul. Every act of undue deference to things temporal, dulls, deadens, and destroys the soul's own consciousness of immortality. Worship the worthless, even in ignorance, and worthless will you yourself become. It is an irresistible law, it is a divine ordinance, that the soul shall throughout assimilate in value to whatsoever it loves. It is so in regard to all pursuits, whether of ambition, trade, or learning. It is so among friends. It is so with the lover and his mistress. It is so with husband and wife, that is if they love one another; which, if they do, their characters are always growing into a closer resemblance of one another, whether that likeness be for better or for worse. Where the heart is given, there the soul also tends; and when the one is fixed on an unworthy object, that instant the other begins falling from its heaven of purity and peace. But blessed is that union of husband and wife, in which

they twain are one flesh, and also, what Christ implied — in which they twain are one heavenly soul. These, in loving one another, love one another's divine aspirations, and each breathes energy into the other's pure purpose. Themselves one spirit, their joint wishes and efforts accelerate their heavenward progress, like the two pinions of an angel, by simultaneous and well-balanced exertion. Without self-sacrifice, Christian marriage is not possible. It is not possible for the hearts of husband and wife to blend permanently on any lower level than the altar of God. A happy union is practicable only among the sons and daughters of the Almighty — only among those who, in resembling one another, are the more nearly like God. Conjugal happiness is perfect, only when the happiest home is regarded as no abiding place. There is no earthly relation that can be correctly enjoyed apart from the solemn sense of its uncertainty. It is the feeling of worldly evanescence alone that can redeem the world's use from sinfulness. For attachment is assimilation. The love of God makes us children of God. And, in things evil, affection approaches its possessor to the value of whatever object he loves. The miser's feelings are always cooling down to the lifeless temperature of his gold; and his heart is for ever hardening into the insensateness of metal.

Oh my God! May it never be my misfortune or my sin to love things temporal with my stronger and eternal feelings! Do thou quicken within me

the knowledge of outward evanescence! I am a pilgrim and a stranger upon earth! Thy word is my guide and my support! May I never lay down thy staff, but with my life! Thou God of the serene heavens above, oh! suffer not my soul to contract affinity with this disturbed, corrupt, and perishable element of time!

The transitoriness of earth! A lively perception of that truth is an ingredient in all virtuous determination. It is not sour in its effect, it is not at all cloistral, it is not melancholy, it is not disheartening, but quite otherwise.

Reader! hast thou the patriarchal habit of going 'to meditate in the field at eventide?' I think, probably not. But do thou go out some time into solitude purposely. Get the town between thee and the setting sun. Give one thought to the grandeur of nature, — it is perishable; another, to thy fellow-townsmen, — hundreds of them grieving and struggling after earthly matters, which, in their aggregate, are not worth one child's pious employment of one hour of the day, so fast hastening from human use. Give another thought to the Lord Christ, once in the flesh and now in the spirit; then stretch abroad thy hands, and, with a faith worthy of the prophet and the prophecy, do thou reflect that heaven and earth shall pass away. And then, if ever thou hast felt those words that shall not pass away, thou shalt be sensible of thy heart within thee, the stronger for this exercise unto

godliness, — the gentler also, the purer, and the more watchful.

There are few misfortunes, whether in body, mind, or estate, so dangerous as that disease of the spiritual eye, by which it fails in perception of the world's evanescence. This deficiency in the soul resembles a consumptive habit of body. It is a general debility of character. It is a predisposition to all vice, and too commonly, also, it is hereditary. What says Dr Thomas Fuller? 'To smell a turf of fresh earth is wholesome for the body — no less are thoughts of mortality cordial for the soul.' To the healthy soul they are cordial; but for the salvation of the luxurious, they are an indispensable astringent. It is a test of the eye's singleness that the world appear transitory, and altogether and vividly so. It is a true test also of a man's worth; for how else could a disciple ever offer up the visible to the unseen — money to an idea, and present pleasure to future bliss? Nay, this may be said, that a saint clings to the eternal principles of righteousness with an energy measurable by his sense of the world's weakness. If St Stephen ever possessed lands or houses, doubtless he sold them, and laid the price at the apostles' feet, in better faith than Ananias kept. The absorption of earthly concerns must have vanished from his mind completely, before he could have seen the heavens opened. Right in character must have been the proto-martyr's faith in the Son of Man,

or Christ could never have appeared to him. Probably, too, St Stephen was privileged with that vision, as being the first to lay down his life for the Gospel. This was the reason for which Jesus manifested himself at the right hand of God, in Stephen's sight, to show that it was into no empty place that his disciples uplifted their hearts, — that his were no powerless hands, through which their martyrized spirits should be commended into divine keeping.

There are false martyrs as well as true, just as there are fictitious as well as real patriots. The endurance of torture and voluntary submission to death, are not necessarily so marvellous as to merit canonization, or military uniform would be more Christian clothing than it is. Nor are all politicians patriots, who happen to be killed in sudden frays. It is not the breath, but the ghost given up, which determines the character of a sufferer's death. Genuine martyrdom is not an isolated act: it is a consummation. Only they are martyrs whose life-times were *martyria:* only they who, when living, were ardent, active, self-sacrificing ensamples of the beauty and goodness of the principles in the maintenance of which they died. The Christian martyr had held stern controversy with himself before waging it with the world: one by one, he had laid down his passions, before laying down his life. He had overcome the dread of the dungeon and the terror of death, by having for a long time

familiarly and lovingly borne the cross, unnoticed by men probably, but always with an Omnipresent Eye upon him. In the primary meaning of the word, the martyrs were martyrs before their deaths. Oh, that power of our blessed faith, so sanctifying and so strengthening! — through which the phrase — testifying to the truth — became synonymous with testifying unto death! There exists a martyr-spirit. Its manifestation is seldom or never understood by spectators. How should it be? For if the wicked only understood the joy of happiness, there would not be one of them but would become righteous, and martyrdom would cease. Also, it is not often that the nature of martyrdom is conjectured aright. Men's admiration of religious resistance unto blood is commonly a very inadequate sympathy. They are passionately affected by the thought of the dark dungeon, the executioner's axe, the flames of Smithfield, and exposure to wild beasts; but Paul and his fellow-sufferers said that none of these things moved them. They had already endured worse trials, although of a different character. Peace arises out of mental conflict; and holy and unwavering determination is the result of many a reluctant sacrifice, of many a repentant prayer, and of many an earnest, agonized inquiry after God's will. Most martyrs must, as it were, have sweat blood, before shedding it. In the judgment of the Father of Spirits, there must be in a martyr's history many more memorable

days than that of his death, though the world seldom thinks it. The clock never yet struck the signal of martyrdom, but the sufferer had heard before a summons almost as hard; and had complied with it, or never would he have been brought unto that hour.

Always, there is a height above the world, to which, if a saint ascend, he finds himself on a scaffold; and if the headsman is not there with his axe, the multitude are there with their hatred, the bigots are there with their enmity; and always in the chaplain's place there is some ravening priest with his 'book of wicked prayers;' and, worst of all, those wretched men are there who sneer at the virtue of which they are themselves consciously deficient, and who scoff at it the more, the more they know they want it. But no one is ever surprised at finding himself in these circumstances, since they are never arrived at unexpectedly; for no one can differ from public opinion, however slightly, without having bitter reason to know it. All who ever had their bodies burned, in spirit had first been crucified — the world to them, and they to the world. There was nothing supernatural or superhuman in martyrdom: it had its beginnings in common life: the spirit that endured it was formed by the fireside and in the closet: it is a manifestation of the nature which is common to all. Every season is a martyr-age. A block stained with blood is peculiar to one century, and the

flaming faggot to another. Daniel's den of lions is the peculiarity of one period, and the office of the Holy Inquisition of another; but the essence of martyrdom appertains to all times. Oh! there are tradesmen now, truest saints, who hold fast their integrity amid circumstances, social and mercantile, in which St Humbert would have failed! There are living women, who maintain their faithfulness under conjugal wrongs, the weight of which would have broken down the constancy of St Catharine! Many a matron endures meekly and in secret a greater intensity of sorrow than St Genevieve was ever famous for in public! Oh! my suffering brothers and sisters! your virtue will have its recompense in the world of saints,—and all the more surely, that you are unnoticed as yet. Do not be distressed at that! Do not be comfortless! It was little honor that the Virgin-Mother had in her own day—and still less had St Mary in hers.

Is this a preliminary chapter in a martyrology? Reader, it is meant to be such. Your honest surprise reminds me of a passage in the life of Johann Himmelfahr, who, some centuries since, was a friar, resident at Interlachen. One evening, Himmelfahr sat with the sacristan of St Lawrence, drinking Rhenish wine, from the vintage of Johannisberg, not improbably. After he had overcome his modesty with an effort, Himmelfahr inquired from his companion in what manner the pious folk

of Interlachen had praised his morning's sermon concerning St Leofgar. The sacristan was amazed at the question, and denied having heard that morning any mention of St Leofgar's name, notwithstanding his having sat close by the pulpit stairs, and never having slept for a greater space than five minutes together. The latter circumstance was acknowledged in a very inaudible tone. 'Bless me!' exclaimed Himmelfahr, 'a miracle! a miracle! Or is it that ancient grudge of Satan's? No! I have it at last. I am satisfied that it was about St Leofgar's virtue I was preaching, and I do think that St Leofgar must have heard me. I hope that he did;—and so, in his marvellous modesty, St Leofgar withheld me from all mention of his blessed name.' Nothing is known now about Himmelfahr's sermon. How should there be? It was forgotten the next day; nay, that same evening, probably. But it is not at all inconceivable that Johann Himmelfahr's eulogium on St Leofgar might have been appropriate and easily intelligible, without any express mention of the saint's name, and the more especially as the sermon was preached on St Leofgar's festival-day.

Who does not know what a warm, and active, and various, and delightful, and wide world of love may be expressed apart from any use of the word itself?

What is martyrdom but self-sacrifice? And in all minds, as well as in the Apostle Paul's, does not this sentiment enter largely into the spirit of self-

sacrifice, that 'we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal?' This chapter, then, may serve as the commencement of sympathy between ourselves and the martyrs; for it is very certain that those sufferers for conscience-sake must have been especially familiar with such reflections as the preceding, — similar in kind, understand, not in worth, — for, doubtless, through some of those martyr-souls there were wont to throng far loftier and more solemn thoughts than we conceive of!

With those martyrs, the world was more serious than it is with us. To their awakened souls, the accidents, employments, and all the incidents of life, were more significant than we feel them. Their spirits were strung to vibrate more readily and more solemnly than ours. But our inferior sensibility is not excusable. Nature is not exhausted of her meaning. Human dangers are as imminent now as they were three centuries back, although some few may be of a different character from such as existed then. The experiences of life are as moving now, as they ever were. The transitoriness of earth, — is it not as palpable at this present time, and as pathetic, as in any of the ages past? Oh! it is a solemn matter to watch the finger creep slowly over the clock's face, and to know that it regulates the step at which an

invisible and irresistible power is entering the house, seeking the chamber, and advancing to the bed of a sick neighbour, and that, as the clock strikes, death strikes! Truly there are sermons preached from carved pulpits, adorned with gold and velvet, which fail of stirring in the heart such strong emotion as the striking of the hour excites, when listened to thoughtfully. Thomas Erpingham often said so, especially to his old friend Philip Watson, who had procured for his clock the appellation, throughout the neighbourhood, of the Preacher-Clock.

One Thursday afternoon, there wanted a few minutes of the hour of five, by this clock, at the time that it was passed by a Hanse merchant, followed by a boy bearing a portmantle.

CHAPTER II.

This new sect of Lollardie,
And also many a heresie
Among the clerkes in themselve,—
It were better dyke and delve,
And stande upon the right faith;
Than know all that the Bible saith,
And errè as some clerkès do.
GOWER.

SIR FRANCIS FAREL came to England in the autumn of the year 1548, for the transaction of business, on behalf of the Hanseatic League. He was a merchant of Mayence, which city was in the second circle of the League, and possessed of high privileges. Sir Francis had been eminently successful in the object of his mission, and was now about visiting his friend Master Willoughby Brandon. His countenance was radiant with delight; and as he looked up at Thomas Erpingham's clock, he appeared to discover fresh reason for satisfaction in the earliness of the hour that was there indicated. On arriving at the stairs near the bridge, Sir Francis inquired from the only waterman who was waiting there, whether he were acquainted with Harborne-house? Being answered in the affirmative, he seated himself in the boat, discharged his attendant, directed the waterman to

be as speedy as he could, and then declined into a day-dream, which, after some duration, was broken by the waterman's saying, 'It is long now since I had your worship for a fare.'

'Thou never hadst him before, probably,' the merchant answered; 'do thy best for him now.'

'It must be fifteen years since I accompanied your worship down to Kirton, where your worship joined the company on the bank, and where the lady slipped from your worship's hands, as your worship was assisting her into my boat.'

'What, Van—Ven—Vance! It was thy courage saved her life.'

The merchant took the waterman by the hand, and tears started into the eyes of them both.

'Why, John Vance, thy age wears greenly,' the merchant said.

'Thanks to your worship's munificence that same day! I have ever since been the owner of seven as fine vessels as there ply upon the water.'

'It was the last week of my residence here; and it would have been the last of my merriment, if sprightly Elizabeth Mayhew had drowned there through my awkwardness. And how have the times been with thee, Vance?'

'Well and ill, your worship! Yet, life has been as pleasant with me as with most, ay, as with any: the saints be thanked!'

'And your own cheerful temper!' the merchant added.

'Why, it is not so much that, as because I have had no great affliction, since the calamity with which I began life. But I have noticed, indeed, that the manner in which the youth encounters his first trouble gives often a character to his life; for it decides whether, besides his property, fortune shall have his spirit at her disposal, to exalt, depress, and play with, at caprice.'

'Come; let me hear thy history,' said the merchant.

'It is short enough, your worship, and simple. My father was the owner of a small vessel, in which he coasted backward and forward, trading between the north of England and Deptford, where we lived, my mother, sister, myself, and an uncle, an ancient priest. One tempestuous night, the vessel was lost, when only ten furlongs from port; and in her my father perished. I was then only eighteen, and the sole dependence of a destitute family. Our kinsfolk advanced a small sum as my beginning in trade; but insisted on its employment in a certain speculation toward which I was myself averse. The undertaking was an utter failure. Unwillingly, I applied to my relations again for help, which, at that time, they could easily have rendered: but they refused it, averring that my failure some way or other betokened misconduct. For a while, I felt utterly reckless, and, no question, but I should have become, what my kinsmen affected to think me, had it not been for love of my

mother and sister, and the help of my patron-saint, Thomas-a-Becket. I brought my mother and sister to the city, became a waterman, and after some years was enabled to purchase a boat; for I wasted not my earnings in taverns or at fairs, since my mother and sister were always my pleasanter company. After your worship's munificence to me, my mother died; and I went a journey to Deptford, where I saw cousin Mary, who, when a little girl insisted on my kissing her, when I was leaving their house, after her father's harsh treatment of me. We are married now, and her dower hath made me very easy in estate. And truly her excellencies have recompensed me a thousand-fold for her father's wrong. My sister, I have portioned off to a husband most worthy of her. We all live in one house, and a blessed home it is. I know not that there have been in it any other than the religious troubles.'

'Fools, fools!' exclaimed the merchant hastily, 'Do you quarrel about religion? Let the government and the priesthood wrangle it out; but do not you quarrel again.'

'We never do. The matter was this. Young Thomas Dobey, my brother-in-law's nephew, unknown to us, had become infected with the new religion so greatly as not to comply with mass in St Paul's church; imagining, in the heat of the time, that he might safely venture a refusal under the new king. But he was arrested instantly, and

imprisoned, and kept so, notwithstanding that mass was abolished the week following. In a while, he died of grief and the bad air. We did all in his behalf that we could, though it was very little. But Dame Bouchier was as kind to us all as ever St Hilda could have been. She visited him in prison daily, and consoled him, and made much interest for him, especially with my Lady Duchess, the Lord Protector's wife. And speedily he would have been pardoned; for the writ was made out for his discharge on the Friday, when Bishop Latimer was to have admonished him; but that, poor youth, he expired on the afternoon of Tuesday. If it had pleased our Lady to have recovered him, we had secretly vowed to send a silver candlestick, to be presented at her altar, in the Dome-Church at Antwerp; for in these days, there is not left to a saint one shrine in all London! Dame Bouchier hath divers times visited my sister to console her; and very movingly, and very religiously doth she talk — her heretical repute notwithstanding.'

'Poor Thomas Dobey! Peace be with his soul,' said the merchant, and sighed.

'I hope it is, your worship. No masses are said for the dead in England now. But we bargained with the priest of St Sepulchre's to say over ten times a day, for six weeks, the prayers appointed for the dead in the King's book; the which he agreed faithfully to do, and do at the altar, if we would be secret upon the matter.'

By this time, the boat was some considerable distance out of the city, and was passing two or three of the swans, which, from old time, had ornamented the waters of the Thames, and which were dignified above all other birds, by its being popularly esteemed as felony to steal them. The merchant looked round him a while, and then said, 'Surely, yonder house should be Wolverley-hall — but it is marvellously enlarged and beautified.'

'Ay, ay!' answered John Vance; 'abbeys are pulled down to build castles with; churches are robbed of their utensils, that some vile woman may have plate; and apostates are paid for perjury in lands left for the maintenance of holy men of God. That house is the deanery of Rochester, — that is, if a soldier can be a dean. My Lord Hartford holds a deanery, is treasurer of a cathedral-church, and possesses also four of its best prebends; and also hath secured for his son three hundred pounds a year out of a bishopric. On what infamous uses hath the wealth of St Thomas's shrine been lavished! Last week, the prior of St Swithin's stood in Charing-cross, begging bread of a baker, — a pitiful sight, — a merciful old man once, which fed all the poor that sought him. And yester-morning, my neighbour, Hugh Wendy, was presented for scattering holy water about his house when a storm was threatening, — a matter which his wife, whom he hath not many months wedded, was the more urgent on him to do, she being mortally afraid of devils.'

'Why, Vance, friend, dost thou care for sprinkling thy chamber or thy bed with holy water?'

'Not I, verily.'

'I began to think thee a vehement favourer of the old faith,' the merchant said.

'Well, I do think the old religion was indifferently good, and better than the present state of matters. Now, what hath been doing these twenty years past? Ruining of abbeys and convents, where poor people used to get bread and medicine; breaking of the blessed images, and roods, and altars, where our fathers were accustomed to pray; and burning of people, abominable to see and hear of,—and they commonly the honestest people of the city. Instead of processioning, as they were wont to do, with candles on Candlemas-day, with palms on Palm-sunday, or away on their feast-days to St Mark, or St George, or to our Lady's of Redcar, in a kindly Christian fashion together,—now, people are all jealous of one another, and prying into one another's conduct, to discover who uses holy candles, who contemns married priests, or has pictures in his house, or who is unable to say his pater-noster in the vulgar tongue. Such searching as there is after all persons who venture a prayer to the saints, or to God's holy mother, and after priests suspected of blessing the bells, or performing the liftings at the Eucharist! What harassing there is by the proctors perpetually inquiring after such Christians as hear mass in secret! What

trouble there is with the vicar and his curates demanding to see your certificate of having received the sacrament at your own parish church! And holidays now are nearly all abolished, but the poor workers get no more wages! I have heard that it is different in your worship's country, else here this new religion is chiefly sacrilegious robbery, and harassing of poor men's lives. But I crave your worship's pardon.'

'Nay, Vance, I want to hear thee. The times are becoming unsettled: dost judge that this church of Cranmer's will succeed?'

'No wicked thing ever does, if we lived long enough to see it proved. And this Church of England is the offspring of his late Majesty's wickedness. It can never be what it ought to be. 'Who can bring a clean thing out of filthiness?' There is not one. Truly, I have noticed that there are undertakings which, commenced from an unrighteous quarter, the ablest and virtuousest men can never quite rectify throughout their course. There are objects in nature, your worship, which, if once infected, are better cast out, away; for no pains or purifiers can rid them of their taint.'

'Stay thee, Vance, awhile. Let us rest on the bank here. These steps—these stones should be Kenelm Cross.'

'Yes, your worship! Many a time, when coming down the river, have I moored my boat to this root of the old oak, and knelt by the cross to say a few

aves, or a pater-noster. And once, as I sat on the steps here, reading the evangels, soon after they had been englished by Master Tyndal, I thought of our blessed Lord's praying for pardon on Pontius Pilate, as not knowing what he did; and I was thinking also, that if the ever-adorable Father be like the Son, whom he sent into this wicked world for our redemption, that then, certainly, those Jewish officers would stand among the forgiven, — when, lo! there came into my heart the grace to forgive Andrew Greaves, whom I had then in my power to punish for the grievous wrong he did me once, and which I purposed avenging on the morrow; the which, if I had done, Andrew could never have maintained his ancient mother so comfortably as now he doth, nor would he have repented towards me, as last year he did, with many tears, making me full restitution also. Awhile ago, a person could not walk through a street in town, nor a mile into the country, without passing a rood, an image of the blessed Virgin, or else of some saint; the which I could never look upon, and retain my anger. But now all of them are destroyed. There is scarcely one left, in all the fields, for miles round the city; and through it, the people are waxed wickeder than ever they have been known.'

'I am afraid, Vance,' the merchant replied, 'from all I see and hear, that manners are vastly worse than under the old religion.'

'Incredibly worse, as even they of the new learning acknowledge. At Paul's cross, last Sunday forenoon, I heard Dr Ridley preach a sermon, which he styled the Lamentation of England, and in which he said throughout, and indeed in one place in these exact words, that 'oppression, pride, covetousness, and a hatred and scorn of all religion, are generally spread among all people, but chiefly those of higher rank.' But what else could result from a Church with the late King for its Head, and Thomas Cranmer for Primate. At the day of judgment, those two men will be known to have been privy to the most execrable crimes that did ever in the womb of darkness, struggle against discovery.'

'I do not myself judge the archbishop so harshly, Vance; and, besides, his crime does not affect the truth of the reformed doctrine.'

'Your worship, Luther's faith may be good or it may be bad. But if Martin Luther's doctrine were pure, as that Paul had from the Lord Jesus, I would not willingly receive it from such men as the late king and his counsellors, any more than I would fall down and worship at Satan's bidding. Last Sunday, as indeed is done in all churches once a quarter, there was read aloud the statute, by which it is declared, that the Book of Common Prayer is 'set forth and delivered by the aid of the Holy Ghost.' But who is ignorant that it is by hands imbrued with the blood of martyrs, and by men whose pouches are swoln with church-plunder; and

as touching doctrine, who have sworn for and against, and against and for, what now they claim the Holy Ghost to have moved them to? Lord Cranmer and his doctors burned good Mistress Ann Askew, in Smithfield, for denying the presence, which now they persecute and imprison Christian people for holding. Peradventure the new faith may be the better, but the courtiers are not the quarter to believe it from.'

'Thou favourest the new learning a little, then?'

'But not so warmly as before the King intermeddled with it. My forefathers were exceedingly inclined to a religious change. My grandfather was a suspected Lollard all his life, and he was a very old man when he died; and my great-grandfather was killed close to the Lord Cobham, in Lincoln-fields. And myself, when search was made with such marvellous stir for Tyndal's Testament, and for the Church of John Rastal, I kept them under the hearth-stone of my chamber, whence, in the night, I drew them out to read.'

'With which party dost thou hold now? Art Roman or reformed?'

'Neither, your worship.'

'Thou art not Anabaptist, art thou?'

'No, except as many are called anabaptists because they are not for the Pope, nor yet for his Grace of Canterbury. To my judgment, there are some doctrines that only the colleges can exactly settle. But the doctors are so disputatious, and

passionate, and covetous of bribes, that for a poor man they are no guidance. Only very few of us can judge whether the Mass-book or the Common Prayer be nearer to the fathers; and perhaps, your worship, it does not much matter which, — at least, so I have thought since reading the Bible myself, — but, questionless, the makers themselves and the accompaniments of the Common Prayer are heinously wrong. The book is sent into the nation in a wrong way, — an evil, wicked, hellish spirit. Spies, proctors, constables, jailers, be every where its pioneers into town and village, and almost into every single church. Your worship, I could not believe St Austin, and I do think hardly St Peter himself, were he to impoverish and imprison other religionists. Once a Franciscan declared to me, that at Glastenbury he had seen it in the evangels, that the Lord Christ, when only St Jude was by, killed a man with the word of his mouth, for denying it. Albeit, I durst not say so, yet I thought within myself that it was the devil arrayed for that time as an angel of light, for such power the devil hath. But truly it was the monk's falsehood, for Master Tyndal hath it not in his Testament.'

Reader! in John Vance's contrivance for eluding the consequences of the friar's assertions, mayest thou witness the corrective power of right reason, through which, in all well-disposed minds, errors, to a great extent, do neutralize one another.

'Your worship,' John Vance continued, 'amid

these religious distractions — the old faith abolished, and the new only such as it is — how ought an unlearned man to think?'

'Exactly in thine own way, good, honest Vance! Religious judgment is of two parts, intellectual and moral. I reckon, that among all the bishops, there is scarcely a doctor possessed of both. Thou hast thyself the more important, and a thousand times, the rarer half.'

John Vance blushed at the warmth of the merchant's words, and began in an inquiring tone, 'Your worship —'

'Hast thou never observed,' the merchant added, 'as I have often, the candle of the Lord, in a man's spirit, shining much further into a dark matter, than all the flaring lights of philosophy can?

Whilst Sir Francis was sitting on the pedestal of Kenelm Cross, with John Vance beside him, on a lower step, the sun went down behind the hill, on the opposite side of the river. Just as he totally disappeared, a lark soared aloft into the beams of light, that no longer touched the earth; and then burst into a thrilling song.

'Now,' said the merchant, 'let us hasten. It must by this time, be the Ave-Mary bell, only that now it doth not ring.'

They re-entered the boat; John Vance promising, 'In half an hour, at farthest, shall we reach Harborne-house.'

Sir Francis thanked him, and then looking up at

the towering elms on the river side, he said within himself, 'Willoughby is in his garden now, listening to these sweet vespers sung by nature in this High Church of God; and wondering at his friend's delay, perhaps.'

Some minutes elapsed in silence: and then the merchant caught the sound of some voices, singing, and soon afterwards sight of a boat; which was filled with a company of German refugees. As his countrymen were borne past him, the merchant rose, and with his head uncovered, joined with deep feeling in their hymn — a grand old hymn of Martin Luther's, written on the death of three young monks of Brussels — the first of the martyrs — and translated thus by some one: —

'Flung to the heedless winds,
Or on the waters cast,
Their ashes shall be watched,
And gathered at the last.

'And from that scattered dust
Around us and abroad,
Shall spring a plenteous seed
Of witnesses for God.

'Jesus hath now received
Their latest living breath, —
Yet vain is Satan's boast
Of victory in their death.

'Still — still — though dead, they speak,
And, trumpet-tongued, proclaim
To many a wakening land
The one availing name.'

In compliance with the merchant's invitation, the waterman agreed to bring his wife and sister to Harborne-house. For Sir Francis was greatly desirous of manifesting the high place which John Vance occupied in his regards.

CHAPTER III.

To church-decrees, your articles require
Submission mollified, if not entire.
Homage denied, to censure you proceed;
But when Curtana will not do the deed,
You lay that pointless clergy-weapon by,
And to the laws, your sword of justice, fly.
Now this your sects the more unkindly take,
(Those prying varlets hit the blots you make,)
Because some ancient friends of yours declare,
Your only rule of faith the Scriptures are;
Interpreted by men of judgment sound,
Which every sect will for themselves expound;
Nor think less reverence to their doctors due
For sound interpretation than to you.

DRYDEN.

WHEN Sir Francis Farel's boat arrived at Harborne House, Master Willoughby Brandon was standing upon the bank of the river, having just accompanied his maternal cousin, Sir Marmaduke, to his wherry. Master Brandon welcomed Sir Francis with much and exceedingly tender show of friendship.

Sir Marmaduke Nelson waved his hand from his wherry, and exclaimed, 'A pleasant meeting to you two friends! Cousin Willoughby, fare thee well!'

Sir Marmaduke was tall, rather thin, and of a dark complexion. He was fifty years of age. His

apparel was costly, and arranged with scrupulous care. His movements were slightly formal; and his temper was imperturbably cool. He was possessed of indefatigable activity; but the expression of his eye betokened indecision of character. He was a member of the king's privy council, which also he had been during the preceding reign. As a courtier, he was eminent both in art and success. He had profited very largely by ecclesiastical confiscations; but had been unable to possess himself of any other office than that of a privy-counsellor. At different times, several high offices had been within his reach; but some scruple or other had always deterred him from possession. It was not that his sense, either of honor or right was very strong, or that he commonly regarded it much; but, in the presence of a very coveted object, it seemed as though the excitement of desire, together with his other faculties, awoke up his conscience also to spasmodic, and, for him, unnatural action. His intimacies were not very warm. He himself never relied on the good-will of any one, servant, colleague, or relative. He disbelieved disinterestedness. He was not deficient in gratitude, though he esteemed it a weakness. It was a feeling which he strove to stifle in his heart, even at the very instant when he was repaying to another good offices, and munificently, as he sometimes did. Deference in any matter to the prior claims of a friend, was a principle which Sir Marmaduke

would almost any time have derided as idiotic and incredible. Yet, twice had he himself been diverted from an eager pursuit by sudden, but, as he still thought, unseasonable scrupulousness, as to the rights of friendship. It was said of him that he had chosen the evil profession of courtier, not so much for the attainment of power, as to surprise spectators with the little defilement which he took. But they who thought so, little knew the repentance which vexed him for every one of his lost opportunities, whether fair or treacherous. Sir Marmaduke was thoroughly acquainted with the principles, temper, and private affairs of all the attendants at court, and of all the persons in the city whom he could discover to be, in any way or time, likely to influence the affairs of the state. It was a congenial amusement with him and business, to devise counter-plots against every conceivable assault upon himself. He was ever furnishing his armory with the means of mischief. There was not one of his colleagues under whom he had not contrived a mine that might be sprung at an hour's warning; yet none of them had he ever injured. There were several who knew that there had been seasons during which they had been helplessly in Sir Marmaduke's power; yet these same persons were not afraid of resisting Sir Marmaduke, even when he was warm in a cause, for they presumed upon his indecision. There had been a few instances in his career, however, in which he had

evinced unexpected determination, and showed publicly that it was only resolution was wanted to qualify him for the highest honours.

This evening, there was a meeting of the privy-council, with certain churchmen present. Sir Marmaduke purposely arrived two hours later than the appointed time, and professed great grief at having mistaken the hour; but, in himself, he was hopeful that a certain business had been disposed of in his absence, which, indeed, was the case.

When Sir Marmaduke was seated, the Duke of Somerset addressed the Archbishop Cranmer, and said, — 'And now, your Grace, having decided on measures satisfactory to yourself and the interests of Holy Church, will you edify the Council with those articles of inquiry to which you have several times referred, and which it is everywhere reported have been so efficacious in your Grace's late visitation of your diocese?'

The Archbishop selected a paper from among the documents which lay upon the table before him, and gave it to his Grace of Somerset; who, inspecting the paper, exclaimed, — 'Seventy! Eighty-five, eighty-six! Sir Thomas, will you read us this paper as briefly as you can? An article here and there will suffice to indicate the manner of his Grace's extraordinary success.'

Sir Thomas Smith then read as follows: — 'Concerning the priests — Whether they preach four times a year against the usurped power of the

Bishop of Rome, and in behalf of the King's power and authority within his own realms?

'Whether they have destroyed and taken away out of the churches all images and shrines, tables, candlesticks, trindals, or rolls of wax, and all other monuments of feigned miracles, idolatry, and superstition; and whether they move their parishioners to do the same in their own houses?

'Whether they preach God's word, once at least in a quarter; and whether, then, they exhort their parishioners to works commanded by Scripture, and not to works devised by men's fancies, as wearing and praying upon beads and such like?

'Whether they plainly recite the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments, in English, immediately after the gospel, as often as there is no sermon?

'Whether learned curates are procured by such as are absent from their benefices?

'Whether they have the whole Bible of the largest volume in every church, and Erasmus' paraphrase in English?

'Whether they reside upon their benefices, and keep hospitality?

'Whether they find a scholar in the universities or some grammar-school, as is incumbent on all such priests as have a thousand pounds a year?

'Concerning the laity — Inquiry to be made concerning the hinderers of the word of God, read in English, or preached sincerely.

'Concerning such as go out of church in time of Litany, or common-prayer, or sermon.

'Concerning such as abuse the ceremonies, cast holy-water upon their beds, bear about them holy-bread, or keep private holidays, as tailors, bakers, brewers, smiths, shoemakers do.

'Concerning communing and jangling in the church at the time of reading the common-prayer, or homilies, or when there is preaching.

'Concerning maintenance of error and heresy.

'Concerning such as are common brawlers, slanderers; such as use charms, sorceries, enchantments, and witchcraft; and such as contemn their own parish church and go elsewhere.

'Concerning such as abuse priests and ministers.

'Concerning such as contemn married priests, and refuse to receive the communion and other sacraments at their hands.

'Concerning such as keep, in their own houses, undefaced images, pictures, paintings, or monuments of feigned miracles.'

'Marvellously acute!' the Duke of Somerset exclaimed. 'Were every other diocese harrowed like that of Canterbury, the church would be freed very soon from the noxious weeds which do now exhaust and choke her soil.'

'By my troth,' said Lord Ferries, 'I have heard it said in a company of reformed doctors, that there hath been no heresy in Kent these last two years, and not much filthiness, but his Grace hath searched

it out, and constrained himself to be familiar therewith.'

These words the Archbishop affected not to hear, and said, 'Sir Marmaduke, there hath been under consideration a memorial of one Roger Ascham, a master of arts, and resident of the University of Cambridge, requesting permission to eat flesh upon fast-days, alleging an exceeding weakness in his stomach. Sir Edward Cheke, also, hath indited a letter commending Master Ascham for his scholarship and marvellous parts, which, indeed, I myself can attest are hugely well reported.'

'Is your Lordship acquainted with him?' inquired Dr Tonstal.

'I know him to be a zealous favourer of the new learning,' the Archbishop replied. 'I have now discovered the letter in which Master Ascham soliciteth my interest with your Lordships in behalf of his petition. He saith, 'that it is not to pamper his flesh, nor out of an affectation of doing that which is unusual, or against common custom, but only for the preserving his health, and that he may the more freely pursue his studies;—that the air of Cambridge is naturally cold and moist, and so the fish-diet the more unwholesome;—that the Egyptian priests, from whom originally issued all kinds of learning and arts, religiously bound themselves to abstain for ever from all eating of fish; no doubt for this only cause, lest the excellence and fiery energy of their genius should be quenched

by any cold juice, such as the eating of fish doth engender; — that it is somewhat unjust, when so many kinds of superstition have flowed from the Egyptians, through the Greeks, the Romans, and the sink of popery to our time, that that single counsel and remedy of those most learned men, enjoined for the enlarging and spreading of learning, should be debarred us to follow; and that by such as are either unlearned themselves, or superstitious men, whereby the best wits receive so great prejudice and damage; — that it is well known how unwholesome and unfit all eating of fish is in the spring-time; — that if he obtain this favour, he will use it without giving offence, or making any common speech of it, with quietness and silence, with abstinence and thanksgiving.' I entreat your merciful consideration for Master Ascham.'

'My Lords,' said Sir Marmaduke, 'Master Ascham hath been rumoured as about to become tutor to my Lady Jane Grey; and, I doubt not, is most highly esteemed by his Grace of Suffolk. You shall do rightly to command your secretary, to assure Master Ascham of your gracious permission in the matter of his suit.'

Then Sir Thomas Smith, the secretary, said, 'It is agreed that Master Roger Ascham may have the grace which he hath craved. Yet he shall certainly repent it; for among the dwellers of the University he shall be the envy of the one portion, and the scandal of the remainder.'

'There is no rebellion like that of the belly,' Lord Ferries remarked. 'So great a scholar as Master Ascham should have been aware of rousing men's stomachs against him; especially as he doth seem to locate the soul therein, rather than in the heart — a very ancient notion as I have heard.'

His Grace was pleased at obtaining this dietary concession, although in such matters of discipline he was usually very strict. The date of the letter which the Archbishop read, showed that he had deferred the application some months. Either to compensate Master Ascham for the delay, or else out of consideration for an academic's poverty, his Grace was afterwards at all the trouble and charges of procuring the king's license for Master Ascham, and of himself transmitting it to Dr Tayler, the Master of Roger Ascham's college.

Addressing the Duke of Somerset, Lord Ferries said, 'I was absent at the time when your Grace mentioned the affair of the Protestant Walloons and Frenchmen. Great profit will accrue to the kingdom from their craft, if it be diligently fostered. Considering the growth of our navy, and of enterprise among our merchants, it is not unreasonable to think, with the help of these Walloons, that sometime the commons of England may be as famous weavers as the Flemings. I hear these Walloons want for shops and houses the grant of some old dissolved abbey.'

'I have offered,' answered the Duke, 'to settle

them at Glastenbury — to provide them houses suitable for their work and their families — to allot each of them as much land as will serve for the pasturage of two cows throughout the year — to supply them with money for the purchase of wool — and to procure them English assistants in their spinning and other works belonging to their trade; so that, I trust, his majesty's subjects shall soon be abundantly supplied with kersies and such like wares, and not need to enrich the foreigners with their gold.'

'I trust, under God,' the Archbishop said, 'that this influx of godly persecuted shall not only redound to the hospitality of England, but also to its wealth and glory, in such a manner, as hath never yet been witnessed. I have been advised by Master John à Lasco of his purpose to voyage hither from Embden next week, on the business concerning which he latterly wrote to his Grace, of providing a suitable settlement for his congregation, most of the members of which are very expert in their mystery, the which is but little understood in this country, and very clumsily practiced. I have examined that district of Southwark, which his Grace hath suggested for their occupation, and esteem it very convenient. The church of St Augustine might be granted them for their use, and for that of their pastor, John à Lasco, a Polish nobleman, as we all know, and a well learned man, having been an intimate of Erasmus, and now

possessed of his library — an incomparable treasure, which will advantage English learning no little. A Lasco's sojourn in England will be a comfort to Dr Bucer, who may be expected quickly from Strasburgh, for I will take the speediest way of transmitting your decision to him.'

'Again, I protest against the invitation,' Lord Ferries said. 'Also, I pray your Grace to advise him to bring but one wife over.'

The Archbishop answered, 'It is improbable that Martin Bucer will disentomb his late wife to import her hither; and if he should so desire, I know of no reason to forbid him.'

'I thought,' said Lord Ferries, 'that this reformed doctor might himself have done what he advised another, and have possessed himself of two living wives like the Landgrave of Hesse.'

'He did not advise, he only allowed,' the Archbishop objected.

'Allowed, sanctioned a Rhenish prince in having two wives, assigning, as an excuse, the peculiarity of his Highness's nature! My Lords, the document has lately been made public in Germany.'

'This matter,' said the Archbishop, 'occurred several years ago, and Dr Bucer's is not the only name subscribed to the letter. It is probable that he appended his signature out of deference to his friends, Luther and Melancthon, right famous men; and they might, perhaps, in a manner, have possibly been constrained by the Landgrave.'

'Perhaps, in a manner, possibly they might,' said Lord Ferries.

The members of the Council smiled at the tone in which Lord Ferries spoke, especially the Duke of Somerset, who secretly disliked Dr Cranmer. The Archbishop easily kept his temper, notwithstanding the pertinacious opposition of Lord Ferries; for he had procured the Council to invite Bucer from the continent much more readily than he had anticipated. Cranmer was very anxious to have Martin Bucer in England, for the sake of his advice, and his influence as a learned man of high reputation.

It is on record that it was in October of the year 1548 that the Archbishop despatched his invitation to Dr Bucer of Strasburgh, to come over to England, urging him to become a labourer in the Lord's harvest here begun, and using other arguments with him to move him hereunto, in the most obliging style possible, calling him '*My Bucer.*' On his arrival in England, Bucer was lodged awhile at Lambeth Palace, together with Peter Martyr, Fagius, John à Lasco, and other foreign divines. Whilst resident with Cranmer, Dr Bucer was employed in revising the English version of the New Testament; subsequently, he was installed in the University of Cambridge, as King's Professor of Divinity; his friend and countryman, Peter Martyr being promoted at the same time to the corresponding chair at Oxford. Their first public services were

the publication of sermons against the religious rebellions which broke out in the counties of Devon, Norfolk, and York. Next, they distinguished themselves by public disputations with the Papists, Martin Bucer being much the more successful of the two. Altogether, probably, the doctrinal character of the English Church is more attributable to Dr Bucer than to any man else. Cranmer's arm struck the blow; but it was Martin Bucer who supplied the die. It is his impress which the English Establishment bears. Dr Martin Bucer's theology, through the book of Common Prayer, has greater influence in England than the accumulated opinions of all native divines of all ages; and, for lack of a better, it is his Lutheran idea of a perfect Christian which English churchmen are still aiming at in this nineteenth century.

Cranmer was highly gratified at having procured for himself so able an assistant as Bucer, and said 'I thank your Lordships for empowering me to invite from beyond sea that famous theologian into these parts. Before separating, let his Majesty's Council devise measures against the growth of the Anabaptists, and especially of Arianism, a heresy which is growing exceeding rife, and must be checked seasonably.'

'My Lord Archbishop,' said Lord Ferries, 'I am weary of these church-matters. The more you have us do, the worse matters get, which betokeneth that we had better leave them alone.'

'But this detestable and impious Arianism — my Lords, we may not pass it over.'

'By those very words did your Grace persuade us to the burning of Mistress Anne Askew; yet your Grace doth now entertain her opinions, and doth cause us to think the same. So that we must now suppose that Mistress Anne Askew was very grievously wronged.'

The Archbishop answered in a low voice, 'No! my Lords, ye may not think so. She opposed the church, and did deservedly die for it.'

'Your Grace hath taught us,' Lord Ferries said, 'to deny the legacy of the keys to St Peter. Will your Grace inform us in what manner you have come by your episcopal sword? For myself, I have never read of any other sword being used than one among all the College of the Apostles, and concerning that one it was directed, and it was St Peter himself held it the while, — 'Put by thy sword into his place, for all that take the sword shall perish with the sword.' '

'They that withstood Moses — Korah, Dathan, and Abiram — were swallowed up — '

'—— of the earth; a jealous executioner, whom I beseech your Grace not to forestal.'

The archbishop drew the fingers of his right hand through his beard nervously, and answered, 'The Philistines were all to be put to the edge of the sword; and cursed were they that spared them.'

'And so your Grace is Jew enough to feel your-

self accursed for mercy! Cease yourself to belong to the uncircumcised and unclean; and then, and only then, may your Grace righteously slay any Canaanite whom you thereafter may discover infesting the land of Judea, if your Grace should ever travel there.'

'I say Mistress Askew opposed the Church,' said the archbishop, who began now to grow choleric.

'The church she opposed!' exclaimed Lord Ferries. 'Who were the church, what was it, what is it? Who but yourself, with some six or seven particular doctors? Opposed the church! Ye may advantageously preach that at Paul's Cross, but his Majesty's Council know otherwise.'

The archbishop looked round the table, and said significantly, 'It troubleth me to believe that the Lord Ferries should ever be suspected as an ill-favourer of the gospel.'

'May it please your Grace to remember that I have taken the new oaths, and am willing to repeat them.'

'By our Lady of Loretto,' exclaimed the old Lord Neville, 'but I do ——'

'Hist! cousin!' said Lord Ferries. 'Swear by the Virgin! Is not that Papistical? My Lord Archbishop, doth it not grieve you to suspect the Lord Neville of a popish oath? Cousin, remember that we of the reformed faith swear by the abbey-lands which we have gained, by our tithe, and such other religious matters, as are not yet abolished.'

'My Lord Neville,' said the Archbishop, blandly, 'you were interrupted.'

'I was simply about to remark, that my cousin doth well understand the necessity of keeping the people submissive to the church; and will not, therefore, grudge obedience himself. It was only yesterday, my cousin was applauding his Grace's vigour. I verily think that he will permit me to satisfy your Lordships that whatever religion his Majesty may decree, my cousin will make it his duty to believe. Was it you, cousin, who told me that the Anabaptists were unsafe subjects? And, verily, if a man be disloyal in religious, then is he to be distrusted in civil matters also.'

'Sagaciously counselled,' the Archbishop remarked. 'It may be owing to these Anabaptists, that lewdness, and loitering, and sturdy begging, do so commonly abound. The Arians begin to have their favourers among the gentry: they must be sternly dealt with.'

Lord Ferries answered in anger, for he imagined that the Archbishop glanced at himself while speaking; but he was mistaken. 'My Lord Archbishop, you shall do exceedingly well to punish as Anabaptists, or as apostates, or as any thing else, the delinquents who were inveighed against, last Sunday, at Paul's Cross. But you shall find your own clergy guiltiest. Let the Anabaptists answer for their faults; but charge them not with infecting people, which be already wickeder than them-

selves. Nay! But I ask these honourable Lords, whether it were the Anabaptist heresy, which persuaded Mistress Strongly to marry Master Claggett?'

Cranmer coloured with shame and anger, for Mistress Strongly was his sister, and at that time had two husbands living. The Archbishop spread his hand on his face; nor did he withdraw it, till he had mentally made prayer on behalf of his erring sister.

Lord Ferries continued, 'If his Grace desire the cause of the prevailing wickedness; let him listen for it; and he will speedily learn it. I overheard two fellows, last evening, discoursing in the dark. The one said 'Now desist Jack from that course; art not afraid of hell?' The other answered, that hell and purgatory had both one bottom: that your Grace had falsified the one, and might soon abolish the other. Then his companion said, 'Nay, have some religion in thee Jack;' and then Jack answered, that he would be ready for religion, years before the Bishops had finally settled it, if indeed they ever would.'

Cranmer said, 'Much of this happeneth through laxity in enforcing the Gospel. It is as the proclamation saith, that shrines and coverings of shrines do yet remain in sundry places of the realm, to the slander of the king's doings, and the great displeasure of Almighty God.'

'That the commonalty be waxing insolent,' said

Dr Tonstal, 'I have found, in my neighbourhood. And concerning Arianism among the gentry, it is entertained by one Master Brandon, a man reputedly of substance.'

'Master Brandon is my cousin,' said Sir Marmaduke sharply.

'I knew it not,' said Dr Tonstal humbly, 'I crave your pardon, worthy and honourable sir.'

'This Brandon's estate might escheat to the crown on conviction,' said Lord Neville, 'and then could pass into the loyal possession of Sir Marmaduke Nelson.'

'I prefer inheriting to accepting the same,' said Sir Marmaduke.

'Sir Marmaduke's wisdom is notable,' said the Archbishop; 'could not you Sir Marmaduke persuade your cousin, concerning his lamentable heresy?'

'At all events,' Lord Neville said, 'it might be understood, that Sir Mamaduke's kinsman, should not suffer by such measures, as the abominable heresies of the times do call for. Respect would be had towards Sir Marmaduke's kinsman, in the enforcement of these righteous measures, which will be the salutary correction of heretics. I doubt not, that though Master Brandon should even be an Arian, yet that he is still a gentleman, and hath not declined from the reverence due to holy church.'

'My Lords,' Sir Marmaduke made answer, 'it shameth me, that a blood-connection should be a

fanatic. Albeit he is a scholar; yet it is marvellous folly in him, to concern himself with religion — a matter, which wise men have in all ages left to the priesthood. I may not hope, my Lord Primate, that he would recant upon trial; so that I pray he may not be put to it. For notwithstanding, that he is harmless, and very loyally disposed; yet is he also surprisingly opinionated; and doth hold with wondrous obstinacy, that to stifle a religious doubt, is oft-times to silence God's inward protest against false doctrine. Also he saith, that the Church ought to encourage the people to examine into her doctrines; maintaining that religion would best prosper so. A most fond and simple notion!'

'Ay, and blasphemous against the Church,' said Lord Neville, 'for it doth imply, that she hath not power to decree doctrines; doth it not your Grace? If men may think as they please, then shall Jack and Hobb jostle Bishops; and synods shall be impugned of tavern-companies; and then shall there be no uniformity in the Church. Nay, and many shall be relapsing into Popery! Ay, and if every fool be allowed his heresy, then shall all religion be speedly trifled away. Shall it not, your Grace?'

Then said Dr Tonstal, 'It is written of his Grace's predecessor, Archbishop Chichely, a most wise and powerful prelate, as his opinion, that the circulation of the Scriptures amongst the laity, was a casting of pearls before swine: and so it would be, were

they allowed to lie under the feet of every heretical opinion. For I have heard, that abroad especially, the heretics do hold to standing upon the Scriptures, to the utter contempt of the fathers, of the first three councils even : on whose conclusions and creeds, our English Church doth so safely rest. If every heretic may put his meaning on the Scriptures, then shall men disregard the true interpretation : the Bible shall resemble a new toy, of which all strange uses shall be made, and in a while be thrown aside, and there be no religion left in the land.'

In conclusion, Sir Marmaduke said, ' Your Grace will pity the errors of my misguided kinsman, and may rest assured, that he will never trouble the peace of the Church : for he is weak in health, and hath not many months to live, as I suppose.'

When the council broke up its sitting, Sir Marmaduke and Lord Ferries remained in the chamber for a few minutes, together with the Secretary, who stayed to arrange his documents.

Sir Marmaduke thought that the usual heat of Lord Ferries' temper must have been inflamed by some recent disappointment in an application, as he conjectured for Church-property ; so he said, ' My Lord, you will scarcely secure his Grace's friendship by opposition so unbecoming a dutiful son of holy Church.'

' The Bishop hath angered me, by an affair, this afternoon, reported to me, concerning his usage of

an old Prebendary, in some matter, about a rood, shrine, or other such thing. These religious are more serious disturbances, than the stir, which you excited, with your new way of pronouncing Greek, Sir Thomas. That Κυβερνω was ever spoken *chiverno*, already appears very strange, and will sometime be incredible. But much more marvellous will be reckoned the uproar of resistance, with which your improvement was encountered by those University doctors. But you triumphed — reason prevailed at last: which I do not believe it would, had you fought for reason with unreasonable weapons. I mean, that if it had been attempted to shut the college doors against all scholars of the old way of pronouncing — and if their learning had been denied — if they had been degraded from their degrees, and some of them imprisoned — if now and then a professor had been burned — and if all this had been done, together with a pretence, that the Greek language would have been corrupted and lost, were other scholars to have been allowed like liberty of pronunciation with yourself — I believe the barbarous old way of reading Greek would never have been abolished or bettered. Likewise I believe that the old religion will never be abolished or bettered — for I do not count it bettered yet — till it be reformed in a more religious manner — without these persecutions and plunderings, and this perjury, which men are forced to.

'Your cousin, Sir Marmaduke, you said, is a

learned man. His heresy is unfortunate. Oh, explain to your cousin, Sir Marmaduke, the wide difference between reading the classics and perusing the Scriptures! Pity, it is, that he can not believe with the Bishops. Explain to him, what I heard a suffragan Bishop lately maintain, that whereas in secular learning, a controversy doth always confirm the truth; in religious matters, the devil avails himself of every soap-bubble doubt, and doth keep it from bursting, to the end that it may distract the faithful; and that it is therefore the vendors of heresy must be silenced.'

'Excuse me!' said Sir Marmaduke, 'It is needless to alarm my cousin, his safety being guaranteed. Gentlemen, farewell.'

The Archbishop returned home to Lambeth that evening, uneasy in his mind. His ecclesiastical principles had been unwittingly shaken by the retorts of Lord Ferries. But it was only their evil leaven which had been disturbed. But that the Archbishop did not consider. He contemplated the righteous side of his principles, and then felt indignant at what Lord Ferries had uttered, while looking at their darker aspect. And so his mind was naturally embittered the more against those heretics, as he deemed them, the mention of whom had occasioned an attack upon himself.

It must be acknowledged that Archbishop Cranmer was not only a reformer but a persecutor: but it was in the early twilight of Protestantism—such

early dawn, that three-quarters of a century later, the aged and Reverend Mr John Robinson said at Leyden, shortly before his congregation sailed away to America: —

'I must herewithal exhort you, to take heed what you receive as truth: examine it, consider it, compare it with the other Scriptures of truth, before you receive it; for it is not possible, the Christian world should have come so lately out of such thick Antichristian darkness, and that perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.'

In judging Cranmer, remember his times and his archiepiscopal throne. An eclipse of the sun is more noticed, than all the twinkling, hourly and momentary as it is, of all the stars. The one is matter of history, the other not even of talk.

Many of Cranmer's faults were those of his age, but his virtues were not. Alas! his crimes were human weakness — specially so. After his execution, his heart was found in the ashes unconsumed: it had previously and long endured the heats of prosperity, uncorrupted.

There are persons, who love to pry into the superstitions of past centuries, and into the crimes of illustrious men, to exult in their own exemption from like frailties. Just as reasonably, might they open a tomb, and uncoffin the dead, and pride themselves in the comparison of their own strength and comeliness!

The bigotry of Cranmer was a preferable quality

to such Papal tolerance as Alexander the Sixth might have exercised!

He that is not with us is against us, — of this Archbishop Thomas Cranmer was too confident; since it is not a sentiment for us mortals, but only for the Omniscient God, and for his Son our Lord!

The Christian Church now comprehends millions among its members, four continents in its extent, and within its boundaries all degrees of knowledge, all orders of men, and many kinds of civilization. For charity's sake, and for Christ's sake, it would be a happy circumstance, were it universally pondered upon, what happened one evening in the Christian Church, even when its extent was but little wider than that of the four walls of such an upper room, as was anciently used in Jerusalem for Passover and other feasts. The Lord Jesus sat at table, with the twelve on either hand; but some of the apostles were so situated, that they could not, on account of their position, see whether St John were in the Master's company or not, although he was actually leaning on Jesus' bosom the while, and was that disciple whom Jesus loved!

As, in every other, so in this present age, there are many best and noblest men, whose names are anathema: their Christianity is too spiritual and elevated for the reach of the bigot's eye; but it is not therefore the less real, or, for that reason, the less certain of being acknowledged, if not here in the flesh, hereafter in the spirit, most blessedly!

'Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.' This reversal will Christ, at his coming consummate; but, thanks be to his Gospel, that it is already and spontaneously commenced!

Though nicknamed a Brownist, during life, the Reverend Mr John Robinson is now written of, as one of the Fathers of the Reformed Church. Downcast, and an exile in Holland, was he in the year 1620, taking mournful leave of his small congregation, in their humble meeting-house: but 224 years subsequently, the speech which he then made, was referred to in a House, wherein its hearing was co-extensive with the world-wide extent of the British empire.

'For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the Reformed Churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no farther than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans can't be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; whatever part of his will our God has revealed to Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it; and the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God, who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented; for though they were burning and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God; but were they now living, would be as willing to embrace further light, as that which they first received. I beseech you remember, 't is an article of your Church Cov-

enant, that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written word of God. Remember that, and every other article of your sacred covenant.'

These words John Robinson spoke, in the month of June 1620; and it was in the same month of the year 1844, that they were made use of during the parliamentary debate on the Dissenters' Chapels Bill. And he that writes hereof is, this eleventh of June, a resident minister in that same county, wherein once dwelt 'Mr John Robinson, a Norfolk divine, beneficed about Yarmouth, but often molested by the Bishop's officers, and, with his friends, almost ruined in the Ecclesiastical Courts.'

God be thanked for him, and every other such, who, 'being dead, yet speaketh!' Honor to his memory, whose free principles are achieving, at this season, a late but signal triumph! Long and lovely be the shadows on his unknown grave, this soft and fragrant evening! His is a share in some God's-acre near Leyden probably: blessings on it! Peace also be with all sufferers for conscience-sake, on this Feast of St Barnabas, this beautiful morrow of St Margaret, this vigil of St Basilides, St Nabor, and the co-martyrs!

CHAPTER IV.

'The priests of God ought to tell us what they suffer, and what they hope; and how they have modified their characters by certain thoughts; in a word, we expect from them the secret memoirs of the soul in its relations with the Deity.' — MADAME DE STAEL.

ON the morrow after his arrival, Sir Francis Farel sat with Master Willoughby Brandon at an open window. It was a soft, warm, fragrant morning. The sun shone, not into, but across the window. It was such weather as predisposes a contemplative man to reveries. No treatise has yet been published on the connection between psychology and meteorological science; but, no doubt, some such dissertation will be produced sometime. How often on a summer's morning the will is asleep, while the eyes are wide open; and thoughts of all characters, solemn and grotesque, throng in and out of the chambers of consciousness, deriding the drowsy will, and defying his power to detain them from this — that — anything — especially the idle, fleecy, dreamy clouds.

Beyond the garden of Harborne-House, in the open field, a hare lay on her side, basking in the sun. Now and then, she lifted her head suddenly, and erected her ears; but it was not out of any apprehension of danger, as was evident by her

still continuing to lie at her length along the grass, while the gardener walked close beside her.

Master Brandon smiled with pleasure at the dumb creature's confidence; but there were tears in the eyes of Sir Francis. He stood behind Master Brandon's chair, leaning gently upon his friend's shoulder; and, after a pause in their conversation, he said,—

'I grieve very much for thine altered appearance, Willoughby, and was last evening much surprised, notwithstanding thy previous warning.'

'Why Francis, didst thou expect to meet thy friends, in mood, look, and character, precisely such as they were fifteen years agone? Even the statue of his late Majesty, which was set up the week before thy voyage to Bremen, hath already required to have the left arm soldered, and the countenance twice repainted, although the ravages of wind and rain are not nearly so merciless as are the visitations of human life.'

'Oh, Willoughby, dear friend! wherein have I offended thee, that thou hast never imparted to me the knowledge of all thy hardships? My wealth—I do loathe it, when I think that it hath failed in helping thee. Thou dost make me hate mine own person, since it hath been unworthy of thy trust.'

'I have never doubted thy kindness,' said Brandon; 'solemnly I assure thee, that never have I needed thy generosity.'

'Generosity! Oh, Willoughby, surely thou wouldst not have felt it such.'

'Well, Francis, friend, comfort thee, then! I have ever been unscrupulous enough to have asked half of thy fortune, but that I have never needed it. Dost forget that it is now ten years since I succeeded to this house, and the Buckingham estate?'

'That sore matter apart, which we wept over last evening, hast thou, in all other respects, been happy, Willoughby?'

'Yes! Some few trials I have had, but still hath my life been fortunate. Assuredly, Francis, the happiest man shall not look back over an extent of years without finding many streaks of disappointment running through; and some few spaces, here and there, discoloured with the bitterness of tears, the more bitterly corroding, perhaps, for their fewness! But how doth the new religion prosper in Mayence?'

'Not at all; nor do I suppose that it will have any fresh accessions elsewhere in my fatherland. Politics are beginning to blend with religion. This duke is an enemy of the new faith, because those Counts befriend it; and the people of one town hate a reformer, because their commercial rivals, in such another city, are all Lutherans. Also, the political arrangements of all European states are beginning to be much affected by these religious divisions.'

'I have myself perceived this, and have bewailed it,' said Master Brandon.

'And this is not the worst, Willoughby. I think that there are symptoms of a Catholic reaction visible in many of our German states certainly, and I have reason to fear that the same may occur in other countries. It is not improbable that every bishopric on the Rhine may be Catholic again — Cologne most certainly so. The hierarchy is the root of the evil. It was an error not to have plucked it up. At Paderborn, for instance, it has sprouted again and blossomed — a corrupt tree, you may know it by its fruits — mitres and masses visibly ripening, images and indulgences, pretended miracles, frocks, cowls, and all other ancient trumpery.'

Master Brandon laughed, and said, 'A strange assortment of vegetables are they to be the product of one tree! But whether grown on a tree, or manufactured at Rome, I grieve for their existence, and especially at their increase. The first strength of the Reformation is spent; much of it has been wasted in intestine strifes. Obstacles, which were once enthusiastically overleapt, will henceforth be insuperable. But the worst is, that religion is now becoming political; and, on most men's minds, the immediate loss of a penny weighs heavier far than the fear of hell.'

'And, then,' Sir Francis added, 'Protestants have discredited their own cause, by persecuting not only Romanists, but one another even. Among us

Germans, John of Leyden's sad doings at Munster have brought shame on the new faith. Unfortunately, also, when the peasants rose throughout Germany, among their demands were many in favour of the new religion; so that the princes attribute all the insurrections to the Wittemberg learning: and although falsely, yet, for this reason, will they support such of the clergy as will attempt the restoration of the old belief. And in many bishoprics they will succeed, and, not improbably, in some entire principalities.'

'But withal, matters are not so deplorable in the fatherland, Francis, as with us. Scarcely could an angel conduct a change in religion without awakening bitterness, so easily is it stirred in the deeps of the human heart. But Satan's self could never have evoked a worse spirit than now animates the church.'

'And will animate it, Willoughby. It is bad by nature, incurably bad. When an evil spirit doth completely possess itself of an institution, ages are inadequate to wear it out. Men correct one another; but institutions pervert those by whom themselves should be rectified. Your English church is the scandal of the Reformation. All its rulers and doings proceed on a principle which I vehemently question—the infinite superiority of a hypocritical and perjured churchman over a pious Catholic.'

'Our reformation,' said Master Brandon, 'to have

been beneficial, or to have escaped being of infinite injury, should have been a popular movement, and not a monarchical decree. The hearts of the people ought to have been its sanction, and not acts of Parliament extorted by terror and by trickery.'

'Most true,' said Sir Francis. 'What with the knavery of his late most gracious Majesty, the truckling of the primate Cranmer, and the intrigues and worse villanies of your courtiers, the church hath been betrayed into a false position. It never will become what it ought to be. It never will have the confidence of the people, even as parent and child, when once estranged, rarely love again.'

'Francis, that is not all. The church is but an institution, and, if rotten, may fall, and a better be built. The worst of the matter is, that men's sense of religion has been so tampered with as to be generally weakened, and in many minds it is quite destroyed.'

'I am afraid, it is so, Willoughby.'

'And yet,' continued Master Brandon, 'the same meddling and coercive measures are persisted in. I say that every man should be his own priest. However, if the people must have spiritual superiors, better the clergy than the court. If religion has latterly declined, which certainly it hath, is it wonderful? What is the chief impression of religion which young men have taken from the public events of these last twenty years? Surely that it is little else than a state-regulation, depend-

ing on the same authority, and enforced by the same penalties, as the excise.'

'Nay, nay, Willoughby! It is a union of church and state you have got — a blessed union, so your lay-impropriators boast, devoutly, if not truly. But by the cobbler's stall at Coblentz, it is a union of gold and potter's clay, and just as incongruous and profitless a mixture. Church and State! King and Latin Grammar! Where is Master Colet's Accidence? Have I mislaid it? Oh, here we have the little book — a besom to sweep liberty clean out of school, as well as church. Now hearken, how this preface says, that 'as for the diversity of grammars, it is well profitably taken away by the King's majesty's wisdom; who foreseeing the inconvenience, and favourably providing the remedy, caused one kind of grammar by sundry learned men to be diligently drawn, and so to be set out, only everywhere to be taught, for the use of learners, and for the hurt in changing of schoolmasters;' wherein as it says, it is profitable, that the boy orderly decline his noun and verb. You thought yourself awoke, this morning, by Silenus laughing at the wood-nymphs, dancing in at your chamber window. Whereas it was my most merry self in your library, laughing over this King's preface, for the uniformity of grammar. Silenus, poor heathen idol, appeareth to none of us moderns. Instead of seeing his merry face, grinning up among the thick leaves of a beech tree, we have been starting at

ghosts and devils, for the last thousand years. We had better see him. But the old fellow could not withstand monkery: and so when nobody believed in him, he vanished. In like manner, it will be with ghosts. Peradventure the same thing may befall the devil at last.'

'Hush, Francis! Enemies there are, over whom it is unsafe to exult, till we have certainly beheld their corpses.'

'Pardon my ill-conduct, Willoughby. Did I not interrupt you?'

'No, no! I was merely lamenting the unfortunate manner of our Reformation, which indeed hath abolished some superstitious practices, but hath also vitiated the very soul of religion.'

'Thou knowest,' Sir Francis said, 'that Cranmer, Calvin, and Knox rival in their claims his Infallibility of Rome. Now, as it seems to me, we must either obey Rome or our consciences — the mass-book, or else our own private judgment concerning the Bible.'

'Most unquestionably. The Reformation is worthless, but as it lifts the slaves of authority into that liberty wherewith Christ hath made disciples free; but as it rolls responsibility away from the steps of the Church to the door of each Christian's conscience.'

'But, Willoughby, what shall be said to the various sects, which are rising?'

'Verily let them rise. Better that there should

be a hearty belief in doctrines differing three or four shades from one another, than that there should be one uniform faith, held from mere habit, and not from strong conviction. The name of Protestant will not extend over more various doctrines than the word Catholic hath covered. Ignatius, Jerome, Austin, Gregory, Bernard, Aquinas, Abelard, Occam — these names do cover a wide variety of opinion. And how many different shades and distinct colours of belief are there between the prayers of St Austin, and the thoughts of an unlettered boor, counting his beads to his saint at night! Then, what fights there were wont to be between Benedictines and Franciscans, and betwixt the friars and the curates! Remember, too, the ludicrous quarrels on the comparative merits of different relics — of the shirt of St Anthony over part of the cheek-bone of St Agatha.'

'Or, as we have it in Mayence, the sword, which beheaded John the Baptist over a bit of the wing of the dragon, which your English St George slew; though to Lutheran eyes, it marvellously resembles a scrap of bad parchment; or, as I read in John Heywood's satire this morning, of a pardoner offering the French head of our Lady for sale, and afterwards recommending as better still, the blessed jaw-bone of All-saints. It was among the commonalty that the old superstitions prevailed most malignantly; dost thou suppose, Willoughby, that the new learning will enlighten them, as marvellously as was promised?'

'Alas, Francis, no! An infinite injury hath been done to their religious conscience, in forcing them to renounce their old faith for the new prayer-book, which indeed they do not understand, and the observances of which are hateful to them, inasmuch as they are compulsory on pain of fine and imprisonment. The fleshly and outward observances of the old belief kept a sense of it alive in the most brutish mind. Images and shrines, fasts and feasts, saints' days and their ceremonies, confession and penance, were adverse to purity of religion, but also they made impossible its utter neglect. They effectively maintained among the people a pervading presence of faith; not the purest certainly, but still everywhere, and strongly felt. The new learning relies on the momentous importance of religion to secure for it attention. But how can this momentous importance operate, except through each individual's sense of responsibility? And this is the feeling which Cranmer and his compeers are striving, might and main, to repress; — persecuting all Christians, lay and clerical, who judge for themselves religiously.'

'Yes,' said Sir Francis, 'that is the precise matter. Our reformers have broken the ceremonial crutches on which religionists were used to rely, but still will not let them grow strong in spirit, so as that their souls may rest upon doctrines. But hark! Those bells — how mellowly and merrily they sound! Assuredly, it is over light hearts they are swinging — or else above very brawny arms.'

'They are Edderton bells,' said Master Brandon. 'Launcelot is on yon path; seemingly he hath been in the village, this morning.'

'Ha! ha!' the merchant laughed, 'now shall we know who roasts the peacock to-day; and to whose health the malmsey is tapped. What, ho! Launce! Launce! Pest on his long ears! or is he cropped, Willoughby? Hath he ever stolen thine hen eggs? Hast had him nailed to the pillory any time, or the barn-door? Launce! Thou hast an incorruptible servant, Willoughby, if temptation hath to shout to him thus loudly. The lazy lady would not do it. Och! ho! Der tauber, der dummkopf! Launce! The knave does hear at last. Ho, he runs for his life now.'

'Nay, nay, Francis; for love, I hope, for love, I trust. Now Launcelot, how is thy little girl's fever, this morning?'

'Oh, as your worship said — better, wondrously better for your worship's help. This morning, at streak of day, she called for father, and before one could say an ave, I blessed God, and was by her crib-side. Margaret hath her senses now, your worship, and can eat milk, a matter of a piggin, three parts full.'

'God's mercy be blessed!' said Master Brandon.

'I was certain the news would please your worship. My wife wept at thinking how glad your worship would be for Margaret; your worship has been so kind to us; as indeed your worship is ever and ever, and always.'

'Well, well, good Launcelot, tell us why the bells are ringing.'

'Your worship, it is for Master Scruton's marriage with Mistress Split.'

'I am glad. For the vicar hath been obnoxious to his bishop, from a suspicion of favouring the old religion. But Mistress Split is of exceedingly tender years.'

'Your worship!' exclaimed Launcelot.

'Surely, it is not her aunt!'

'No, your worship! It is her great aunt, or else her grandmother, Mistress Dorothy Split at Atherton.'

'Thank thee, Launce. Shame on them, shame on them both!'

'What, did Mammon give her in marriage?' The merchant asked. 'Did a parson take her from such unscriptural hands?'

'Ay, ay! A fool, no doubt, that hath said in his heart, there is no love! But who can tell? Mayhap the marriage is for policy only: since the Reformed Church doth eschew a clerical bachelor as worse than a heretic. No wife, no promotion now-a-days! An unmarried priest is ever a suspected Papist. However, the clergy may have to put away their wives again, as in the late king's time. Master Scruton is a wary man; and hath no doubt made his choice on purpose, so as easily to be parted with, should the times require it. But so greatly older than he! Those forty-five years have an ill

look between them. Albeit, until this morning, the venerable lady hath uniformly been accounted a marvel of discretion.'

'There are ears,' Sir Francis replied, 'judicious also, and Protestant, which startle at the mention of a married priest, as if Satan's sanctity were spoken of. Among my neighbours, at Frankfort, there is great controversy, whether the marriage of Protestant pastors be expedient or no. What is thy judgment, Willoughby?'

'That it is in every way at least as expedient for them, as for their flocks — and rather more so, perhaps. To complete my idea of a reformed minister, marriage is essential. The old faith was a religion of certain times, particular places, and certain ceremonies: the new should be the Religion of Life. The priest reads his Latin prayers, often to himself an unknown tongue; performs the prescribed motions with his head and hands, his back and feet; lifts the consecrated bread into the air the appointed number of times; then eats a little of it: and that is his daily offering, that of the mass. But the Protestant sacrifice should be that of the minister's heart offered on the altar of duty. Instead of swinging about him burning drugs in a silver censer, he of the reformed religion should radiate from his heart peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, love and faith. I would have him commune with God, chiefly out of the fulness of his own soul, and not out of a mass-book, whether

according to the use of Sarum, Lichfield, Sodor or York. Instead of a conscientious priest wearing his health out by an iteration of twenty masses upon a fasting stomach, I would have him come from intercourse with the Deity like Moses from his forty days' sojourn in the mount, his face radiant with saintly happiness.'

'But an unmarried priesthood might be and do all this which you have now said.'

'They might, Francis; but they would not commonly; for celibacy, when compulsory, doth often generate a trifle more of sourness than the sweetest temperament can quite correct. The pastor should be among his parishioners the pattern-man; —one whose blessed business it is to translate the Christian doctrine out of the Greek evangels into English manners; rendering the subject-matter of ancient parchments into common action, into every-day sentiment, for the easier understanding of the unlearned. To this end ought he to participate in all social relations. I am not decided but that he should share also in arts and commerce. The blast of the breath emits varying sounds through the brass tube, according as it is straight, like a horn, or twisted into a clarion. Out of an equal abundance of the heart also, the mouth speaketh very diverse things, according as that heart is fenced by a baron's corslet, or throbs in a widow's bosom. And from the lips of one, who hath spent a lifetime of strength on Aristotle, and whose sole company

hath been with lexicographers, the gospel sounds with marvellous difference to what it doth from the pages of the New Testament, which rejoice with them that do rejoice, and will have us weep with them that weep. If it were certain that Occam had superseded St Peter at the portal of heaven, then logical acumen might be thought a Christian passport; but it is otherwise. The apostles have not been supplanted by doctors — by none, sweet, seraphic, nor irrefragable. The pastor ought to address the wants, woes, and wishes of his congregation. Men should be preached to, not as Nominalists or Realists, Papists or Lollards, but as having human hearts in them; and it is only the language of the heart will reach them — the words of one who hath loved, feared, and suffered the same things as themselves. Now, are not married love, paternal fondness, and domestic anxiety, three of the most abundant sources of the strongest human feelings?'

'Well,' answered Sir Francis, 'it is lawful I acknowledge, and, I think, that it may possibly be expedient, that priests marry. But Luther's marriage entailed a grievous scandal on his new religion. However, let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind.'

'No clerical, any more than a laic person, will marry without. Be satisfied of that, Francis.'

'I yield you, Willoughby, that priests may have wives, and the more willingly, as I have found a

right pleasant way wherein a priestess, or a deacon's wife, may array herself. Here the verses are, written on the blank leaf of Simon Frith's Attack on the Begging Friars: —

'Would my good lady love me best,
And work after my will,
I should a garment goodliest
Gar make her body till.

Her sark should be her body next,
Of chastity so white;
With shame and dread together mixt,
The same should be perfyte.

Her gown should be of godliness,
Well ribbon'd with renown;
Purfiled with pleasure in ilk place,
Furred with fine fashioun.

Her belt should be of benignity,
About her middle meet;
Her mantle of humility,
To thole both wind and wet.

Her sleeves should be of esperance,
To keep her from despair;
Her gloves of the good governance,
To hide her fingers fair.'

'Mercy, Francis, no more! Such clothing might do for an angel, or for the women of Ind, but not for Mistress Scruton, I trow, in the open streets, and cold of Edderton: or speedily she would be spiritualized in person as well as in dress. But who is this writer?'

'Robert Henrysoun the Scot. The verses are part of his poem styled the Garment of Good Ladies. Robes and wearers alike imaginary!'

'Fie, Francis! Sir Francis! Do you forget your knightly oath? Dishonoured, recreant, false to your plighted faith, your lady's love, and the service you have sworn! You blush Sir Francis Farel, and it is proper that you should. If ever again the courts of love should be opened, I will away on to the Rhine and indict you.'

'Pardon me, Willoughby. I will retract, revoke, recall, recant—any thing in reason! You were describing the Protestant priest as he ought to be, when I, rudely enough, interposed with this lady's garment; and now that you have seen and scorned it, will you resume?'

'No, I do not scorn it. Henrysoun's was no common genius. But in that instance his analogy between clothes and virtue is forced too far. The fault would have been more pardonable, if his wife or some sempstress had written the lines.'

'But yet,' said Sir Francis, holding up the book, 'it is a pretty vein of sentiment.'

'Vein! thread of thought you mean. The lines do not flow, they are stitched together.'

'Willoughby, you are too severe on my Lady's Garment.'

'So I am. In truth I like the poem, apart from a little matter of taste.'

'You were saying, Willoughby, that the Protestant pastor ought to share in all the interests of life,

and that his human nature is incomplete who hath no wife or child to care for.'

'Nay, I said not that, though I would have the priest share in all human relations. I would have his income the exactly struck average of that of his parishioners — and rather than too large, I would have it small. For no sermon is commonly so nauseous as that on the vanity of the world, when preached in cope, rochet, and lawn-sleeves. Also, as nearly as possible, should the pastor be in such circumstances as to experience the usual lot of human nature, in its hardships, wants, and happiness. To take these, and think of them rightly, is his own work as a human being, and to expound them is his office as a preacher. He is, as it were, to show the good of evil; to detect and demonstrate Divine purpose in human difficulty; to reconcile men to suffering by the manner and temper of his explanations thereof; to evince how heaven doth begin on earth; and to manifest how nigh unto one another God and the soul do sometimes draw, even among ourselves, who dwell this side the fleshly veil, which separates us human from those brighter spirits of heaven.'

After a few moments, Master Brandon continued. 'In every sense the Protestant minister should be Christ-like in the sight of men, be a kind of mediator between Providence with the righteousness thereof, and human life with its sorrow and many evils. But, oh! that one Mediator between God and us, blessed and glorious, may he be for ever-

more, for that sweet peace, into which his uttered name hath power to soothe our fears!'

To this thanksgiving of his friend, Sir Francis responded 'Amen;' then seeing Master Brandon's emotion, he embraced him, and said, 'In the chambers of the memory, there are objects which no years or chance ever thrust out. All of us have some departed friend, whose features reminiscence can recall, placid, expressive, and as well known as they were before God changed his countenance and sent him away. Among the recollected dead, there are some over whose beloved faces oblivion can never draw their shrouds, nor would we have them hidden — dear, pleasant, and consolatory — inasmuch as from their remembered features are now reflected some few rays of his glory, in whose presence their souls are standing.'

Master Brandon thanked Sir Francis for his kindness, and proposed that they should recreate themselves for a walk; and then he sent an attendant with Sir Francis Farel's humblest respects to Mistress Rachel Brandon, his sister, requesting her company, the which she withheld, pretending a slight cough. But her true reasons were partly, that she wished to superintend her maidens in the preparation of dinner, and partly that she was afraid of walking out in her gown of sky-blue silk, lest there should be rain; whilst her gown of mouse-colour was more frayed in the bodice than she cared to have remarked by an ancient admirer.

CHAPTER V.

'Our spirituality, what do they? Some be clerks of the kitchen; some surveyors or receivers.' — LATIMER.

THE day, which followed the preceding conversation was Saturday; and Master Brandon with Sir Francis Farel made a morning's walk thereon, into Edderton. Anciently the smithy stood apart from the village, about a quarter of a mile, which when these two friends approached, they were stopped by an angry altercation, to which, when they had listened awhile, Master Willoughby, with Sir Francis advanced to the door of the smithy; inside which stood Abel Fulton the smith, with his heaviest hammer on his shoulder, and his round face red with wrath, whilst he watched the motions of the parish constable, whom Sir Bray, the curate, was encouraging to the execution of his office. Sir Bray doffed his clerical cap to Master Brandon, and inclined towards him reverently, he being in his heart glad to have a business interrupted, the which threatened him with discomfiture, and perhaps with bodily danger.

'Abel, Abel,' Master Brandon said, 'art thou not called the quiet smith?'

Abel Fulton dropped his hammer, and answered, 'Now, hear your worship. Ever since I acquainted

farmer Howden, in secret, how Master Bray wronged him in the matter of the black horse, which your worship may have seen sometimes lame in the off, hind leg, hath Mr Bray been pestiferous upon me, troubling me mightily about religion.'

'It is a lie,' Master Bray answered. 'Every one knoweth, that the proclamation of his most gracious Majesty, whom God preserve from papistical machinations, and from all other devilish arts, doth command strict inquisition to be made in every parish after such as pray in the Latin and not upon the English Primer. Also yester-morning the unmannerly knave laughed at the church-door, whilst our worshipful vicar, and his most respectable and virtuous bride were coming away from the chancel; where I, most unworthy to do it, had celebrated between them the praiseworthy ordinance of lawful marriage. The wicked caitiff is suspected to be a contemner of married priests, contrary to the King's statute.'

'May it please your worship, what I said at the Tabbard last evening was, that clergy be sometimes guilty of worse matters than lawfully marrying aged women.'

'I guilty! Has any person ever heard — does your worship — smith, art looking at me? As regards Jemima, the horse Jemima, I mean — the mare which I sold to Humphrey Howden so cheaply. — Art laughing, caitiff? Verily, thou shalt

rue thine impudence in the compter; thou shalt sit in the stocks, shalt stand in the pillory, shalt be whipped at the town post, as also at the cart-tail. Thou shalt be bored through the tongue, shalt be branded on the cheek, both cheeks. Insult the clergy, wilt thou, thou dirty smith and Papist?'

'Your worship, did I look at him? I never did. I looked at your worship's self.'

Then the curate told the constable that he must needs procure additional assistance for the arrest of the stubborn smith. But Master Brandon said, 'Is the vicar at his house, or hath he accompanied his fair bride to Atherton-Hall? This morning, I have had an entire buck presented to me. The fat, Sir Curate, lieth along the ribs lusciously thick.'

'Doth it so?' inquired Master Bray. 'Doth it lie a finger's depth along the fourth rib? Has your worship inquired into its age? The fore-foot — has your worship examined it? Was the animal skilfully killed? Some of your huntsmen do mangle the flesh shamefully, and that often in the sweetest parts. How many days hath the breath of its nostrils been out?'

Master Brandon answered, 'I have a haunch for a friend, which hath not one scratch upon it. But touching our neighbor here?'

'If your worship doth desire it, I could forget his wrongs towards myself, who am his curate; but concerning his obstinate contempt of the English Primer, the king's proclamation is express against it.'

'Your worship,' Abel Fulton replied, 'my father and my grandfather said paternoster and credo on the mass-book, and in that manner did they instruct me. And what harm? This I do know, for it is what I see, that there be no such farriers now-a-days as before St Dunstan was banished.'

Master Bray answered with great contempt, 'No undoubted Christian hath ever prayed in Latin. And I have heard that Dr Hopps, who hath greater repute for learning than all the cardinals, doth hold that Adam, the original of us all, did, beyond doubt, pray in his mother-tongue.'

Master Brandon smiled pleasantly, and said, 'Abel, the king doth order us to pray in English.'

'It hath been said,' answered Abel Fulton, 'that the German friar hath a devil; and certainly the religious troubles all began with him. In our church, when the Holy Mother of God was pulled down, the people shouting for Luther the while, I swore never to pray after Luther's manner, though now it is a long time since. And they do say, that the King's Primer is Cranmer's making, and not Luther's book at all.'

'Be satisfied, smith, the Lutherans pray not after the fashion of the Primer.'

'Your worship is certain? Then assuredly will I get the schoolmaster to teach me the English paternoster.'

Then Master Brandon said, 'Sir clerk, wilt thou honor the noble buck I spoke of, so far as to accept a haunch of his venison?'

'Many thanks, worshipful sir,' said Master Bray. 'I shall be at my poor home an hour hence at farthest.'

Also Master Brandon put a piece of silver into the constable's hand, and said, 'The quiet smith seemeth a loyal subject. Art thou the officer hereabouts, who once remarked, that the better policy maketh the people love the authorities? It was a good saying. Good morning to you all!'

When Master Brandon was returning home, Sir Francis laughed aloud, and embraced him, and said, 'The League hath deputed me to England to negotiate their business. Better they had secured thy help, wily Willoughby! Admirable Brandon didst come by that astuteness innocently? Verily a lawyer's practice were inadequate to give it. Certes, thou couldst balk Lucifer of a victim; for hast thou not pacified an angry priest?'

'But then, Francis, Satan hath not that unappeasable appetite for venison which the curate has. I know not how it may be with the German priests, but very commonly among the clergy of this neighbourhood, the staunchest heresy-hunter may be thrown off his scent, if you but cross it with venison.'

'That is well,' said Sir Francis. 'And always it has been well for the world, that the priesthood have had their foibles, for they would have been irresistible, for evil at least, could they but have denied themselves feasting, as well as marriage.'

CHAPTER VI.

They, that to refute the invocation of saints, have denied that they have any knowledge of our affairs below, have proceeded too far, and must pardon my opinion, till I can thoroughly answer that piece of Scripture, 'At the conversion of a sinner, the angels in heaven rejoice.'—Sir Thomas Browne.

The morrow after encountering the curate, Master Brandon, and his friend, Sir Francis rose earlier than it was Master Brandon's wont, for it was Sunday. It was just open daylight, and the sun was rising redly out of the blue mist of an autumnal morning, when Master Brandon, with his household kneeling round him, prayed those special prayers which befit the day, and that early season of the day, at which our Lord arose from death. When Master Brandon and his family had ceased praying, they shook hands with one another, and blessed one another.

At breakfast, Master Brandon said, 'Ale, Francis; or wilt drink some of thine own vintage, this morning? It is excellent any where, and almost any time, although your patriotism must still excuse its smacking but harshly on the palate, after the Portingal juice, or even your own mead. I am not choice in my drinks, but still I say, that excepting this very welcome gift of your own, no other Rhenish wines can endure exportation.'

'And why?' asked Sir Francis.

'Because prior to drinking them pleasantly, the wine-bibber ought to toil up the hill-sides of their growth, at noon also, and on the dog-days. What a beautiful morning this is! Francis, I have ever loved to see the sun rise on the Sabbath, partly as being that season, at which the Lord Christ first looked at it after his sleep of death: also I much dislike being hurried in the few domestic arrangements, which are not to be dispensed with on the Sunday; for it is only when I am up betimes, and am calm in mind, that the sun seems to me to rise with healing under his wings. Besides, this is not our day, to shorten as we please; it is the Lord's day.'

'The recurrence of the Sabbath,' said Sir Francis, 'is a pledge of the Divine Faithfulness, but especially so is the sun's regularity in rising. 'Since the fathers died, all things continue alike from the beginning of the creation.' But this is not through unconcern; or darkness at its next coming must thicken into everlasting night. See how red the windows of yonder church are, as the sun shines through them.'

'And look,' Master Brandon added, 'how much more brightly the sun appears to shine in the church-yard, than in the fields beyond! Doth it not seem, as though himself newly risen, he were re-gilding with his rays, the promise which is written, in golden letters, on some of the grave-

stones, 'even so them, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him at his coming?''

'It doth,' said Sir Francis. 'God's constancy in nature ought to persuade us beholders of his faithfulness to his word. It is evidence for the Gospel, which will accumulate in strength, morning by morning, unto the end of all things. The covenant, of which Christ is the mediator is with that same God, who, from time to time, doth set his bow, in those rainy, threatening clouds, which intervene between his heaven and our earth.'

'You still love the rainbow, Francis. Bread! There is a manchet near you. Will you assist my sister to some mutton; or, Rachel, will you attempt this venison-pasty? It is an ancient belief, groundless, but also very pleasant, that when God doth set his bow in the clouds, spirits pass to and fro upon it. The rainbow was meant to be a help to faith, and assuredly it is such: it is a bridge into the world of unseen things, on which the feebler of my aspirations have often mounted high above their usual earthliness.'

'Willoughby stops the tankard,' said Sir Francis. 'Thank you. What think you? When I was latterly at Florence, there were invited one day the Signors Strozzi, Capello, Cenci, Sforza, and other merchants, to meet Augustus Fugger and myself, the merchant of Augsburgh, not his cousin, lately ennobled. Also there were present the renowned artist Benvenuto Cellini, and the painter Tiziano

Vecelli, a right pleasant man. At least there were thirty persons in the company, and they all had separate drinking-cups.'

'That is marvellous, Francis, but rather unsocial, is it not? A strange custom it is! It is, no doubt, a subtle device of the goldsmiths for the increase of their art. Separate cups at the same table, so many of them, and they of silver, did you say? It is very curious. Latinized into Socinus, what is the proper name of your Italian friend? Signor Soccini? Well, was he with you at the banquet?'

'No. He had left me, hoping to meet an uncle at Bologna, where also his father Dr Socinus resides, a right famous man in the University, and Professor of Law. And thence he went to Signor Gentili at Vicenza, so that I saw him not again.'

'Gentili is one of the Vicenza Arians, I presume; though among the names of other illustrious men, I have never heard his. Under Providence, would that one Italian state might be reformed! I have desired it greatly, and shall now long for it the more, inasmuch as you found the new religionists there, so many of them Arian, or at least, as you report, so tolerant. I yearn for their success. How hard it is for faith to quite purify our wishes from their impatient alloy! As to the progress of religious reform, I like Luther's sentiment—'Let our Lord God look to it.' We looking back, perceive no reason why salvation should not have followed on the fall immediately; nor why Christ should not have com-

forted the human race in Adam's lifetime, as well as 4000 years later, during the existence, and towards the dispersion of the Jewish people. We see no reason why Arian truth should not triumph instantly: but peradventure the Deity does. Generations hence may rejoice in God's unfolded plans; but to reverence their inscrutableness with folded hands and with bowed head is ours: and for our spiritual profit, perhaps, it is not the least precious part. Along with prophets and righteous men, we may allowably desire the sight of the distant day, but we may not be distressed at the want thereof. The accomplishment of our Arian hopes may be utterly frustrated — the curtain that hangs between us and their consummation, we may, perhaps, never live to see one corner of uplifted. What then, Francis? Darkness is God's as well as light, and therein, if we cannot work, we can pray—and that with more constancy and faith, than we should perhaps retain in the glaring sunlight of good fortune.'

'In the worshipful company,' said Sir Francis, 'which I was just now speaking of, I saw Dr Andrew Alciati, Professor of Law at Milan now. He is a reputed Arian; and I was therefore grieved at having no opportunity of privately addressing him. You have doubtless heard of Alciati. Among the lawyers he is worse than Reuchlin was with the monks—and by a like potency of Latin and Greek. You were accustomed to admire Justinian's Pandects, though revolting from most of the glosses

thereon, and from the learned, lumbering, legal nonsense, as you were wont to style it, of the Reports and Commentaries. Dr Alciati's opinion is not altogether dissimilar. He insists on the Pandects being read under Cicero's help,' and with a knowledge of the times and usages amid which they were published, especially of the sixth century.'

'Most excellent, and yet but reasonable!'

'Also his Greek knowledge hath acquainted him with the works of the Grecian jurists, who till a century ago, practiced the Roman law at Constantinople, more purely than it hath been observed in any other country since the fall of the empire.'

'I have heard of Signor Alciati's fame,' Master Brandon said, 'and of his wrongs, I am afraid; have I not?'

'He hath been driven over half Europe; at one University dispossessed of his Professorial Chair by intrigue; at another expelled thence by violence. He lectures at Milan now, but hath been pursued even thither, by the hatred of his fellow-lawyers: so intolerant are they of change.'

'I thought, Francis, that no professional enmity had equalled the intestine jealousies of the clergy.'

'Heaven forbid it! Indeed, it could not well be. None others can persecute like the ministers of peace, especially if some more generous and learned brother, be their victim! There never occurred among jurists I hope, a like case with that of the young priest, I heard of yesterday, deliberately har-

assed out of his cure into poverty and such distress of mind as was partial madness; and that by priests dwelling in and adjacent to his own parish. I wonder his sufferings did not eat into their souls.'

'Ay, ay, they will hereafter. Does that soothe your indignation? It was altogether a mournful history: also you forget that his subsequent hardships were unknown to them, that were their cause' ——

'Willoughby, they might have been guessed at.'

'And ought to be still,' added Master Brandon, 'only that there are no temptations like the clerical. You and I are spared them, God be thanked!'

'Unwillingly would I be either priest or prince, Willoughby. I am no Pythagorean; else both at matins, and vespers, and at nones, ay, every hour, I could pray that my soul, after transmigration, might, by no means find itself either under a clerical cap or beneath a royal dais.'

'I think, Francis, that you could supply a few additional adages to Erasmus' book, only that some way, few honest men have ever opposed the priesthood and prospered. You and Dr Desiderius agree right well on royalty and priestcraft.'

'Every man hath his Utopia; mine is of a land of good magistrates and charitable priests.'

'Priests, both bishops and ministers, charitable, and in every sense of the word do you mean?—Verily, before your Utopia is found, Sir Thomas More's will have become common-place.'

'But More,' said Sir Francis, 'provides for a charitable priesthood, doth he not?'

'He provides a good chance of it. He could not well do more. The book is on the shelf behind you, lying on the top of St Austin, in folio. Thank you. This day, at this time, I nearly always remember our friend. There is a passage in this book of his, which commonly recurs to my mind, from long custom, just at this season. It is the context of the passage wherein is described the utopian view of death.'

'Read the entire passage, will you? for I have never heard any portion of the work in the writer's native tongue.'

Then Master Brandon read this out of Sir Thomas's book on the Utopians: —

'They are almost all of them very firmly persuaded that good men will be infinitely happy in another state; so that, although they are compassionate to all that are sick, yet they lament no man's death, except they see him part with life uneasy, and as if he were forced to it; for they look on this as a very ill presage, as if the soul, being conscious to itself of guilt, and quite hopeless, were afraid to die, from some secret hints of approaching misery. They think that such a man's appearance before God cannot be acceptable to him; who, being called on, does not go out cheerfully, but is backward and unwilling, and is, as it were, dragged to it. They are struck with horror when they see

any die in this manner, and carry them out in silence and with sorrow; and praying God that he would be merciful to the errors of the departed soul, they lay the body in the ground. But when any die cheerfully and full of hope, they do not mourn for them, but sing hymns when they carry out their bodies; and commending their souls very earnestly to God, in such a manner that their whole behaviour is rather grave than sad, they burn the body, and set up a pillar where the pile was made, with an inscription to the honour of such men's memory. And when they come from the funeral, they discourse of their good life and worthy actions, but speak of nothing oftener, and with more pleasure, than of their serenity at their death.

'They think such respect, paid to the memory of good men, is both the greatest incitement to engage others to follow their example, and the most acceptable worship that can be offered them; for they believe, that though by the imperfection of human sight they are invisible to us, yet that they are present among us, and hear those discourses that pass concerning themselves. And they think that it does not agree to the happiness of departed souls, not to be at liberty to be where they will. Nor do they imagine them capable of the ingratitude of not desiring to see those friends, with whom they lived on earth in the strictest bonds of love and kindness; and they judge that such good principles, as all other good things, are rather increased than less-

ened in good men after their death; so that they conclude they are still among the living, and do observe all that is said or done by them; and they engage in all affairs that they set about with so much the more assurance, trusting to their protection; and the opinion they have of their ancestors being still present is a great restraint on them from all ill designs.'

Having shut the book, Master Brandon said,—'A hidden and intangible soul, within each living body, is universal belief: why, then, should not the possibility be confessed of spiritual presence in the earth, imperceptible by the eye or the ear indeed, but not unreasonable, whatever any doctor may allege: since a restricted locality for departed souls is no article of scriptural, although it be of Catholic faith.'

Then Sir Francis rejoined,—'There is a conjectural, as well as positive belief; and among theological truths, there is ample room left for its use, purposely I think; and which may most profitably be exercised, provided it be done in harmony with revelation, in humility and in awe. There are several articles of the Roman Church which are beautiful as speculations, which are comfortable also and useful, when held so far only as they are congenial with the believer's mind, but which become pernicious in their spirit, by being decreed as dogmas essential to salvation. Man has not only affirmatory, but also conjectural faculties; and in

order to their exercise in religion, there are subjects designedly left obscure. Much spiritual benefit have I experienced from silently speculating on the Unknown in the spirit of the Known — a process whereby I have felt my religion the more reasonable, and my reason become the more religious.'

'Very good, Francis! You have expressed clearly what before I dimly thought. But as I was about saying, this concluding sentiment of Sir Thomas's commonly occurs to my mind, at this hour of the Sabbath, whilst walking, as I usually do, in the garden a short while. That there is a world of spirits around us I do suppose; sometimes I am certain thereof almost — there being seasons when we thrill to the invisible more readily than at others; and mysterious moments wherein the soul is dimly conscious of an innate affinity with some other world, solemn and unknown. Whilst thus, as it were, 'in the spirit,' have I felt what misunderstood are superstitious beginnings; I mean the supernatural appearance which, at such seasons, the commonest objects assume, the bodily senses being in a manner, glorified when the soul's higher faculties are astir, like the strings of a lyre, all vibrating, though only one be struck. Meditating on them that have departed this life, the breeze has seemed to me, on a Sabbath morning, freighted with their last breath, a penetrating power of peace and love; and many times have I started among the elm-trees yonder at their voices, seeming,

though repressed, to sigh softly in the branches above.) This moral meaning of nature, rising with the soul's mood, would be most inexplicable, but that God is all in all; in drawing nigh to whom earnestly, external objects, all of them, seem heavenward steps, and, no doubt, were divinely meant to serve as such.'

Here Master Brandon paused during a few moments, and then continued.—'But specially do they appear so, on the Lord's day: the calm and the holy associations of the Sunday co-operating with my religious feelings; my contemplation of the past has risen sometimes almost into the vividness of the present; the memory changing into the presence of the dead, so blessed, and of such purifying efficacy, as that the soul is not unwillingly self-deceived. Self-deceived! Why should I say so?—God and his spiritual family are the only two ultimate ends in the universe; with the Deity we commune through our devotional impulses; is it unreasonable to imagine that there is wrought into our souls some affinity with the world of spirits, however latent the feeling may be as yet? Worship is preparatory to the ecstatic vision: and of the communion of saints, it is not improbable that our nature might, by a religious observer, even now be found to afford some suggestive token, some preliminary feeling, nobler at least than the vulgar fear of ghosts.'

On the curious question here discussed, it is not

possible to determine Master Brandon's exact opinion. It is not unlikely that this was one of the conjectural points of his faith; the intensity of which would, in that case, be much dependent on his mental mood. There may have been enthusiastic and very brief, momentary seasons almost, wherein he may not have been disinclined towards the judgment of Sir Thomas More; and sometimes, not improbably, he soothed himself contentedly with such feelings as Dr Southey once expressed: —

> My thoughts are with the dead; with them
> I live on long past years,
> Their virtues love, their faults condemn,
> Partake their hopes and fears.
>
> My hopes are with the dead; anon
> My place with them will be,
> And I with them shall travel on
> Through all futurity.

At the end of the preceding conversation, Master Brandon said, 'Now, Francis, friend, for the happy day which I have promised you with the Church of Christ in my cousin's house. It is an hour's ride hence to Rivington Hall: I have not seen cousin Jane Bouchier this whole week.'

While they were riding to Rivington Hall, and were slowly ascending a hill, an old woman rose from a bench, outside her cottage door, and exclaimed in tremulous tones, 'Mary, the mother of God, bless your worships, and incline your worships to

give me an alms. This is the feast of the ever-blessed St Michael. I am debtor to the saint for a candle, and am unable to pay him.'

Master Brandon answered, 'If the saint care about the candle, he must care about thyself much more, and will forgive thee, I doubt not.'

'Your worship, St Michael might forgive: but much I fear, that he would in no manner pardon myself, who am but a poor, lone, weak creature.—My rheumatism is very bad.'

'Saints' days be abolished,' said Master Brandon, 'and offerings to the saints be made punishable.'

'But surely your worship will not hinder an old woman in her religion! The new way may be the better for the young people: the King and the clergy should know best: but old feet want old paths. Your worship, oh your worship! where shall I get the candle for St Michael?'

'Let the matter of the candle rest, Martha: if thou art caught burning it, thou wilt be imprisoned, and wilt die in prison perhaps.'

'But oh, the candle for St Michael, the which I shall now never, never buy!'

'I tell thee, Martha, the saints all of them do pardon that poverty, which is of God's ordaining.'

'St Michael's candle, how shall I ever get it?—The saint will think, that I am afraid of burning it, whereas I can in no wise procure one. Oh dear! if the constables care about a poor candle so much, as to trouble a body for burning it; what will the

blessed St Michael do, since the candle is his offering and his right; and ever since St Ann's holiday, when I promised him, have I been trying and trying to pay, but been unable.'

Then Master Brandon gave the old woman money; at which she was greatly rejoiced, and said, 'All the saints bless your worship, and pray for your worship: and may the Virgin Mother of God have you in her keeping!'

Master Brandon moved his horse up the hill; but Sir Francis lingered behind, and held out his hand to the old woman, and said to her, 'Now there shall no farthing of this be spent on saints, or candles, or on holy water, on masses, or on any such matters. It is for thyself only. And, good mother, the saints will be right well pleased; for their special delight is in the happiness of aged widows: as I was once assured in Rome, by a learned and very righteous doctor.'

The old woman was astonished at the sight of Sir Francis' bounty; she was not heard, however, to invoke the saints upon him; since she was speechless through excessive gratitude. Those be not the warmest prayers, which the priest offers in the Church, aloud, with his surplice on, and after much preparation: but usually they be those, which have never been framed into words, but which have only been felt, formed in the spirit: even as the best men do often love their acquaintance exceedingly beyond expectation. Is it not so; do they not? In

many a neighbourhood, might there be an increased happiness, did its inhabitants only know how much of mutual respect there is amongst them. There be inexhaustible depths of love in human hearts, such as would make our fallen world bloom with all the glorious products of Eden, saving only the tree of Life, were there but channels constructed for affection to flow in. The land of Egypt was once as desolate, as human life is still; but furrows have been cut for the river Nile, wherein its waters may irrigate the country; and it is thereby made a land of corn and of exceeding wealth; so that indeed the desert doth there blossom like the rose.

After Sir Francis Farel had rejoined his friend, who waited for him nigh the beech-tree at the top of the hill, Master Brandon said, 'There will be other persons to hear service at my cousin Jane's, in addition to those, of like opinions with ourselves: for indeed Master Asheton's doctrine doth draw some thither, even from the city.'

'How is it that these many years a priest hath celebrated worship openly, in your cousin's house?'

'My cousin Jane hath a license permitting her to have religious ordinances celebrated in any chapel or oratory on her manors. Oswald, her deceased husband, procured the document from the Archbishop, immediately on the troubles breaking out, foreseeing the annoyance which his family might be thus exempted from.'

'Is Master Asheton, the bold man his preaching should betoken?'

'Scarcely, Francis: and yet I cannot say. A few years ago, he was summoned on a certain religious point, and on his trial, he recanted. Afterwards, there came upon him such an agony of conscience for his error, that no where and in no manner could he find peace. He travelled far from the place of his relapse, but his grief still grew upon him; till at last he returned to the scene of his adventure, and openly and in St Paul's Church, he withdrew his recantation. But the King's own mind had that very week been altered, so that Master Asheton unwittingly saved his life, by his very willingness to lose it!'

'You wrote me once, that your cousin and her husband were imprisoned. On what terms were they discharged?'

'On the King's free pardon, which we procured, through the great favour which the Lord Scales had with his Majesty at that time. They were accused of the Anabaptist notion, concerning the flesh of our Lord's person—an immaterial doctrine, on which their judgment was, at that time, in no wise decided; for they did not quite believe, nor could they altogether deny it. The Commissary wondered at their joint refusal to abjure the heretical matter charged against them; but when he understood, that notwithstanding their refusal to recant, they yet did not entirely receive the opinion, he was enraged that they should be so much more scrupulous concerning their doubts, than others about their dearest doctrines. Yet Dr Leigh was afterwards

reflected upon, as though he had discharged my cousins through partiality; whereas his sin in regard to them was of a worse character.'

'I had conjectured that this imprisonment might have been occasioned by the English Testaments, which I despatched them from Cologne at their request, and my own great risk.'

'The receipt, and then the circulation of those bibles was a most perilous work. Once we should have been detected, all of us together, but for the simplest chance, or rather, but for a veil of God's interposing, by which our holy work was screened from wicked inquisitors. I think, that, but for my cousin's zeal in publishing those Testaments, the old religion would perhaps have prevailed again. Divers of those whose characters are the strength of the Reformed Church, would readily have relapsed into the old learning, through disgust at the King and the archbishop, had not my cousin Jane procured their perusal of Tindal's Testament, and of other books, which she carried with her secretly to the Court, and even into the presence.'

'In your letter,' said Sir Francis, 'last May, you made me inquire for Mistress Jane whether Justin Martyr's works had been printed at Basle. I thought the fathers and all the ancient doctors were slightly reputed by Protestants.'

'My cousin Jane carries her great zeal into her Anti-trinitarianism; and she is strongly persuaded that the doctrine of One God in One person may

even be established by the admissions of the fathers themselves.'

'That were strong ground, indeed, Willoughby.'

'She is searching into it diligently; although of her progress, she hath not spoken to me these many weeks. I do hope that she is making ready some great discovery with which suddenly to delight us.'

On arriving at Rivington Hall, Master Brandon and Sir Francis were informed that Mistress Bouchier was temporarily absent; wherefore, till her return, they betook themselves to the library, which was a venerable room. On the one side of it there were three windows of richly-stained glass, and on the other, as also at either end, were rows of books, which, for a student, stood above one another, in learned and right pleasant array. The two lower shelves were filled with folios, wooden-bound and brass-clasped, most of them, although some few were covered with new vellum, immaculate as a newly-washed surplice, and as typical perhaps of inward purity. The topmost shelf was the standing-place of the smaller volumes, and among them were nearly all those with which Aldus scandalized the doctrines of his day, when he printed and sold duodecimos at Venice. Those erudite men, in their praiseworthy zeal for learning, feared lest the nobility of letters should decline with their size; they thought that the dignity of reading would be abridged with the bulk of the volume. When books should no longer be as tall as young children, it was

seriously imagined that they would be reckoned as but childish playthings. But it did not prove so.

Most of the books were in the Latin language, and the larger portion of them from foreign presses, chiefly those of Rome, Venice, Basle, Nuremberg, Cologne, Leipsic, Wittemberg, Leyden, and Paris. No small proportion of the volumes related to controversies which have been many ages extinct, and the names of many of the others have been these hundred years more redolent of mouldiness than wit. But pleasantly otherwise has been the history of some of the books of Mistress Bouchier's era; for instance, those of Erasmus, especially the loftier efforts of his genius, which have renewed their youth like the eagles, age after age. Also many of the works which were standard volumes in the fifteenth century, still rear themselves in the temple of literature, massive, supporting, and richly ornamented pillars; the same holy book still lies open upon the lectern, only in a version rather more modern than that of Thomas Matthews; but some of the works which were once the corner-stones lie now at the foundation of the edifice, very venerable, indeed, but more curious than useful, somewhat like the position of the Saxon crypt underneath York Minster.

As before mentioned, Mistress Bouchier's library was a spacious chamber, and solemn, as all libraries ought to be, since they are next after churches in holiness, serious thought being but a minor kind of

worship. And as to sacred associations, there are some libraries which abound in more than a Catholic church possesses; each recess therein containing, not indeed the sculptured image of a saint, but something nobler still, his very spirit—his works, thoughts, religion, prayers, and, as in St Austin's case, his confessions even. Probably no painting hangs there of St George's fight with the dragon; but the Novum Organon Scientiarum is there, with Lord Bacon's portrait, commemorative of a still more glorious victory, namely, the utter extinction of those *à priori* theories, those chimeras dire, those false and hydra-headed systems which infested the seats of learning once so mournfully. Memorials also are there, not indeed of such common men as have expelled demons out of a few of their neighbours, by the help of objurgation and holy water; but of philosophers who have exercised whole nations, and who, by the agony and the sweat of their brain, have purified from evil spirits some wide regions of human thought. Why, what papal relic is comparable in interest with the earlier copies of the printed Bible, with ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, especially of the Alexandrian recension, with some of the rarer Elzevir editions of the classics, so neat, and almost beloved; or with that Greek Testament of Martin Luther's, which he made use of in the castle of Wartburg, and which is now preserved, and that right worthily, in the well-stored study of a reverend citizen of York?

The sculls ranged in glass-cases at Cologne, in the church of St Ursula, and the eleven thousand virgins, are not more solemn mementoes, than a library of as many volumes. 'Of making books there is no end,' would Solomon have said. 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!' Those books—what prolonged and racking thought they some of them cost, rewarded, in not a few instances, with most thankless results! That unfinished volume is indeed the spirit of its author; into its noble pages he transfused his life, for he expired at the desk, a pen in his hand! Martyrs and Confessors! There is not a day in the 365 of the Literary Calendar but has one or more such; and who might say, what has been said for Dante, and each one of them full as bitterly —

> '——— 'Tis the doom
> Of spirits of my order to be rack'd
> In life; to wear their hearts out, and consume
> Their days in endless strife, and die alone.'

It was not so; it was not so; it was not their self-sufficient pride! Thou bigotted religionist, study is more sorrowful than petulant: remember, remember, I say, those assertions made by one of thine own authorities — 'He that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.'

There was once a custom in some churches to place a library above the porch; it might have ap-

propriately been lodged within, since it is only through thought that man can draw nigh to the Deity, and since, to worship right, man must think aright. Also religion and philosophy act and react on one another beneficially. Now, for one possessed of this conviction, his study is a religious vestibule, or is even a side-chapel, wherein he breathes common air with the Christian church, the consolations of both being of a like character.

There have been students among the socially proscribed, who have enlarged their minds into vast kingdoms, in which the men of old time have been their noble, princely guests, and who have possessed themselves of the comforting belief, next in strength to that of their salvation, that they should share not only the acquaintance, but the warm love of their congenial authors; and who have forgotten the wrongs they were actually enduring, in pleasurable anticipations of Jeremy Taylor's society, Erasmus's look, and More's hearty welcome.

Though the altar alone can consecrate, yet literature can exalt our human affections: else would a Christian divine have celebrated Pericles and Aspasia, excusing them as heathens, should it seem as though 'their solemn love were crime.'? Abelard and Heloise! What would their love have been, either in itself, in worth, and tenderness, or in fame, had it not been elevated above common coarseness, by philosophy, reading, and taste? What Cicero intimates is quite true — community of study is like

that of blood, a bond of relationship, in strength almost fraternal. Margaret Roper — there are many women whose living presence is of less power than her name, though it is more than three hundred years old. She was almost as widely known as her father, and deservedly so; being renowned through Europe for her learning, but still more for the filial affection which that learning strengthened and did so marvellously beautify 'her daughterly love and dear charity.'

Assuredly the atmosphere of books is nigh in sanctity to that of a temple; for a studious life is priestlike; also there are many sorts of sacrifice, and among the lower kinds, meditation is not with the Deity the least acceptable; so that the purely-minded student does very nearly accomplish David's ancient desire, and dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'

Among the books in Mistress Bouchier's library were the works of St Ambrose, and of several other fathers — Bonaventura on the Body of Christ, and on preparing for its Devout Reception; a Catalogue of Saints, their lives, sufferings, &c.; the Confessor's Manual; Cardinal Bovilli on St Paul's Rapture; Jerome on the Lives of the Egyptian Fathers, as also on those who died in the Thebaid, Scythia, and Mesopatamia; a Mass-book translated from the Ethiopic; Dr Martin Luther's Epistles, according to the title-page, full of piety and learning; Melancthon's Works; Zuingle's Works; a

Book of all the Positions maintained by Luther, from the beginning of his dispute with the Church, up to the year 1538.

There also were the works which were published, according as Archbishop Cranmer described him, by that most Godly Prince of famous memory, our late Sovereign Lord, King Henry VIII.: the King's Answer to Luther; the King's Book, or the necessary doctrine and erudition of any Christian man; the King's Book, or the difference between the kingly and ecclesiastical power; and the King's Primer, or Book of Prayers.

There also were Jerome's epistles on the Reverence due to Saintly Relics; St Ambrose's Discourse on the office and dignity of Priests; St Jerome on the Perpetual Virginity of the glorious Virgin Mary; John de Sletstat on the Prelates, to whom all souls are subject; Isidore on the sects and names of Heretics; St Thomas Aquinas on the Manner of Confessing, and on purity of conscience; Mabordæus on the nature of gems and precious stones, self-described as very useful in the study of medicine and the scriptures; Jacob Bergomen's treatise on Memorable and Illustrious Women; Erasmus's Works; Christian Soldier's Handbook, or his preparation for death; Christian Widow; Diatribe against Luther; Praise of Folly; Way to restore the peace of the Church; Bucer's Letter to the English Church; St Athanasius's Works; Seven Books on the errors of the Trinity,

by Michael Servetus; Eruditorium Religiosorum, self-lauded as a most excellent work, essential for every priest and religious man, as being a most happy explication in honour of the Everlasting Trinity, 2 vols. folio; a work on the Four Cardinal Virtues and Vices; Brother Angelus on cases of Conscience; Sir John Mandeville; and at the end of one of the shelves, only half thrust into its place, a Treatise, said on the title-page to be written by Master John Calvin, a man of right excellent learning, and no less conversation.

This last volume Sir Francis was about examining, when Mistress Jane Bouchier entered the library. She was forty-two years of age, but appeared to be of much younger years; was of the middle height, sanguine complexion rather, and of exceeding beauty. Her presence was gracious; her words of great sweetness; and her address betokened the rarest and most admirable combination of courage with the freshest modesty; —

> 'A perfect woman, nobly planned,
> To warn, to comfort, and command;
> And yet a spirit, still, and bright,
> With something of an angel light.'

CHAPTER VII.

He bore his great commission in his look:
But sweetly tempered awe; and softened all he spoke.
He preached the joys of heaven, and pains of hell,
And warned the sinner with becoming zeal;
But on eternal mercy loved to dwell.
He taught the gospel rather than the law:
And forced himself to drive, but loved to draw.
For fear but freezes minds: but love like heat,
Exhales the soul sublime, to seek her native seat.

CHAUCER.

TEN of the clock was the hour at which Mistress Jane Bouchier and her fellow-worshippers were accustomed to assemble. The morning, Sir Francis was present in the chapel, there were, in all, fifty-three souls gathered together in Christ's name.

Master John Asheton, a priest of reverend appearance and age, offered up prayers to God; and read out of Matthew Tindal's Bible, commenting on the darker passages thereof. Next the congregation sung a psalm together; and then Master Asheton made a homily upon this Scripture following:—

'If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever beareth not his cross, and cometh after me, cannot be my disciple.'

'This text hath in times past been a stronghold of monkery. Our Lord enjoineth to hate our mothers, wives, children, yea, and our lives also; not however in the monkish manner. Also he commandeth our hatred of the world; but he meant not by that, what Simeon Stylites thought, nor yet what St Bernard imagined.

'When our Lord Christ preached that the world must be hated, he intended not to disparage the cornfields around him, nor the olive-yards farther off, nor Mount Lebanon, with 'the cedars of the Lord' upon its sides, and with ever-enduring snow upon its glistening summits; for considered he not the very lilies of the field, marvelling how they grew, and with what glory they were clothed? Nor, when he taught that his disciples should hate their wives and children, did he mean to dissuade his hearers from the ordinance of matrimony, or deny that 'a man shall cleave to his wife.' That were an erroneous understanding of the Lord's words, uttered by him in Palestine, which should militate against God's determination concerning man, in the garden of Eden — 'It is not good, that the man should be himself alone: I will make him a help meet for him.'

'Doth our text say, that a disciple, to come to Christ, must hate his brethren; another passage doth very straitly maintain, that 'If any man say, I love God, and hate his brother, he is a liar; for how can he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, love God whom he hath not seen.'

'There be limits to the Christian hatred of life and friends: for it is only in a certain sense, and in some views that they must be hated. The handwriting upon the cross, which the disciple takes up, when following after the Lord, is self-denial, and not self-abhorrence.

'It is marvellous how men have attempted to evince their love of God, by their hatred of life, society, and the earth; as though disparagement of his handiwork were homage to the Creator's self.

'This affected hatred of life is no papal peculiarity; it is an error of human nature, and doth characterize very largely the superstitions of the East; also it was entertained both by Jews and Gentiles, many ages before the Catholic Church adopted it. It has resulted from erroneous thoughts of the Deity. God has been regarded too exclusively as a taskmaster; his omniscience having been allowed to aggravate too severely the thought of his inspection; and his almightiness having been mainly regarded as making his religious exactions the more terrible. There be few minds but remember more of God's threats than of his invitations. Usually men conceive of God only as being terrible in majesty, as armed with the lightning, and riding on the whirlwind; whereas, he is just as much present in the warm and fragrant breezes of May, in the harvest time when men and women laugh among the dry sheaves of plump wheat, or in the joy of little children, when late in the evening they shout

round the wagon, which brings into the village the last bountiful load of a well-secured harvest.

'We think of God chiefly when we are sorrowful. It would be well for us, and more profitable perhaps, to remember him in our pleasures, when we meet with success, or feel in full strength, or press our children to our breasts, or when the rejoicing sunshine doth gladden us. We are more familiar with supplication than with thanksgiving, and that from ingratitude, and not because our unprovisioned wants are the more numerous. Every omitted thanksgiving doth detract from our faith, and from its supporting power; and doth contribute also to render our communion with God a monotony of complaint and petition, a gloomy wearying of heaven and ourselves with selfish prayers.

'God is called a king in the Scriptures sometimes, and commonly it is in the attitude of a king that our loftiest conceptions of him are formed. But he is more truly a Father than a Sovereign. The despotism, and the obsequiousness of a court are unworthy exemplars of the relations subsisting between God and man, which are much better betokened by the positions of father and child; by the watchfulness, and wisdom, and untiring love of the parent on the one part, and on the other, by his offspring's trust and joy in him, and reverential obedience for his slightest behest. The manner of the divine government is Fatherly rather than imperial. Prayers should resemble a beloved child's entreaty,

more than a memorial to a dread and sovereign lord; instead of which men do usually worship God in the same mind in which they serve the worst and most terrible of their emperors; as though Jehovah were King of Kings in the same bad sense, in which Paul was once a Pharisee of the Pharisees. In some countries it is hard to distinguish the worship which the inhabitants pay to the Deity, from that which they present to their tyrants, both being so utterly slavish. But the service of the Christian God is not paid by fear, prostrating the worshipper in the dust, and pouring forth abject expressions of self-contempt, but is joy in the Holy Ghost, a warm utterance 'of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.'

'When the monasteries were emptied of their inhabitants and their treasures, it was hard to persuade the better monks to relax their severities in watching and fasting, the use of the hair-shirt and the scourge, and their other and perpetual self-mortifications. They judged that asceticism was essential Christianity, whereas it is a corrupt adjunct, and was an old superstition when the gospel was young. The genius of Diogenes was not uncommon or unpopular among the Greeks. There was a philosopher, Plotinus, who professed to be ashamed of having a body. Also before the Christian era began, there was among the Jews a sect of Essenes; and in Egypt, and other countries of the Roman empire, there were many Gnostics, professing and

practising those ascetical doctrines, the subsequent introduction of which into the Christian Church made monks, hermits, and other self-torturers; and which do still continue to poison and pervert the best minds. Sir Angelo, that noble Italian artist, writing of beauty in one of his excellent sonnets, saith of it, that 'it is the frail and weary weed in which God doth dress the soul, which he hath called into time.' Frail and weary? Sir Angelo scarcely meant it: he of all men could least intend it. It was not the gifted poet spoke then, nor the artist so widely and justly famed; but only the Catholic religionist. Pitiful it is, and a grievous error, when asceticism doth pervert men's minds in such manner, as that what is said religiously, should intellectually be false.

'Contempt of life is not necessarily a virtue; nor is it always an arduous acquisition. It is vulgarly even a vicious manifestation: it is a reputed characteristic of the savage nations of the worse portion of Africa: it is the quality of a suicide: it is also most remarkably exhibited in the plague, by attendants, commonly the refuse of the people, who encounter the infection, tempted merely by enormous hire, and by the prospect of plunder in a desolate house. Life contemned in this manner is not a virtue; nor yet was it such among the Christian fanatics of the third century, who forced their own martyrdoms, by wantonly insulting the heathen priests, and by taunting the magistrates to an unwilling

execution of their sanguinary laws. Such martyrdoms were suicides; and doubtless were rewarded with the stigma of the self-murderer, and not with a crown of glory, like that which was laid up for Paul, the Saint and Martyr.

'Innocent laughter hath sometimes been proscribed as though it were desecration: the thrill of friendship, the glow of affection, and joy in natural beauties, some theologians have disapproved of as being sympathy with fallen creatures; and some have denounced them as loathsome and sinful, in such a manner, as though on the sixth day, God saw all that he had made, and lo! it was dreadfully evil! And indeed, of old time, there were many, and now there are not a few, who keep the Sabbath with such mortifications, as though instead of having 'blessed the seventh day, and sanctified,' God had pronounced upon it a withering and almighty curse. Life is a fitting of man's self for heaven, or ought to be; but out of all the New-Testament-worthies, there are none, for whose society monkery can be a right preparative, I think.

'Solomon in his Ecclesiastes saith, that better 'is the day of death than the day that one is born;' but no Christian must say it, for though it may be happier, man doth 'not live by bread only,' nor for happiness alone, but for probation. No! Life is not contemptible, is not odious; it is to be held as a trust, as a solemn gift, with the possession of which are linked high responsibilities. It is a

greater thing to value, than to despise life; even as they are only the learned, who lament those inestimable manuscripts which the royal officers ignorantly burned for fuel, at that time when the abbeys were suppressed. Life is no common-place matter; it may feel so, when we are disappointed, when we are wearied with labour, or are disgusted with meanness, and then we may say with the Jewish preacher, 'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity!' But myself, how often in my more cheerful moments, and at those more thoughtful seasons, when my awakened faculties have made me most truly man, have I been awe-stricken and breathless, whilst the great mystery of life has occurred to my mind in sudden vividness! In such moments, what a miracle have I felt myself! Excepting God himself, what is there more wondrous than the existence of the finite amid the infinite; than this birth of feeling, thinking, and active life in our bosoms, which, a short while since were inanimate, insensate dust! What thought is there more wondrous than this, that we are living souls, abroad and active on the face of a world, which was once 'without form and void!' Well might the sons of God shout for joy, when the first man of our race stood up erect amid the trees of Eden! It was the birth of mortal spirit; and that Paradisaical wonder is repeated in the growth of every infant, and throughout the life of every man!

'Man is of such a nature, and the surrounding

world of such a character, that human life is more than animal; it being necessarily intellectual, moral, and religious. Man is environed with hostile elements, but in resisting their power he acquires a wisdom, which makes him mightier than they. Whilst discharging the duties, and enjoying the delights of childhood, neighbourhood, friendship, and marriage, feelings are awakened in the human breast of such a character, affections are elicited of such purity, and modes of thinking are formed of such a noble nature, as in their aggregate are spirit. Also existence is religious. The loves and losses, the happy, the hard, and the awful experiences of life dispose men to religion. There is no savage but hath some form of faith; blindly, but strongly does his heart urge him to seek the Lord, if so be he may grope after him and find him. Every man that stands in God's presence, doth feel a mysterious affinity with it. Into every human heart which God submits to the discipline of this life, there is inwrought a yearning after what is life's purpose. Even in the most sadly sullied spirit, there is a dim consciousness of its imprisoned state in this flesh. Whether ignorant or learned, there is in all men a constitutional conviction, that their lives are a scene, in which good and evil powers are struggling together for the mastery. There are necessitating causes for faith, there are the beginnings of religion in every created soul; and these religious beginnings, the circumstances of life are so

adapted as to develope, and with evangelic help to perfect.

'Life is not to be lightly, but most solemnly esteemed. And the effect of 'pure religion and undefiled' is to endear all participants of life, to make us love them, not grossly, but with a pure, reverential affection, such as readily passes into thanksgiving to the God and Father of all. Christianity saith to us, 'the temple of God is holy, which ye are.' The serf may be despicable in the esteem of the baron; nevertheless he is a truer tabernacle of the Godhead, than a church, a minister, or other temple made with hands; and from his heart there may ascend more welcome incense than was offered on the altar at Jerusalem. Done as under God's eye, the lowliest duty of a servant to her master, assumes then the character of a heavenly service: discharged religiously, the humblest office doth exalt the spirit like a high priesthood. Such power has religion to make the wilderness of life 'glad and flourish as the rose;' to put us on the side of God, thereby making our fight in the world a celestial service, instead of a selfish struggle; and by revealing their relation to heaven, thus beautifully doth the gospel transfigure in our eyes and glorify all earthly things!

'Religion doth make us revere life, and rightly. For consider how the mind is formed. Is it not by the discipline of life; by our bodily necessities, and our social relations? An infant, secluded in a

dark closet, and duly fed, would grow up to manhood, but would be as helpless and simple as a babe. Every object a child sees doth increase its knowledge; and every accident which it bemoans doth correct its experience. It is thus that knowlege, principles, and character are formed. Even were our capacities to remain the same, and were the Almighty to diminish the facts and events which befall us, our knowledge and our worth would be diminished proportionately. By merely blinding us to the lessons of nature, could God reduce mankind to the ignorance of brutes. Nay! In a certain sense, this life is one long conference with the Deity, prior to our admittance into heaven. We, on our parts, pray; and God, on his, doth instruct, warn, remonstrate, and encourage us perpetually. The Gospel is his word; and the movements of nature, divine signs and symbols are they all for human instruction: the most trifling of them are solemn paragraphs of some providential lesson; since not a sparrow even 'shall fall to the ground without your Father.' Verily, the most impatient to quit life are the least fitted; since it is little experience they can have had of its moral design. Men would not be so hasty to abandon the world, either as monks or as suicides, did they but see the jewels of wisdom and faith which are scattered so plentifully along its paths; and lacking which no soul can come again from beyond the grave to gather.

'King David once said, 'Oh, that I had wings like a dove, then would I flee away and be at rest.' It was his Jewish, but it is no Christian desire. We Christians would not flee away, even to heavenly rest, without the divine permission. Were some man or angel to reveal to us the secret, how a soul might innocently disengage itself from the body, and wing its way to the trees which grow beside the waters of the river of life, we should rightly scruple our departure, unless God's voice were heard assuring us, 'Now mayest thou, my servant, depart in peace.' That voice is indescribable, for no man hath ever heard it and lived: but in the mind of the righteous man how blessedly it sounds, is perhaps betokened by the sweet smile, which the soul in departing doth often leave upon the countenance.

'Ah! in the hour of death, faith will be our only availing possession. How many persons mistake, as though innocent recollections would be support enough! And how many Pharisees imagine the blessedness of looking back from their deathbeds upon years of intense hatred, borne unremittingly against what they call the world, namely, their fellow men and their pleasures! But faith is not formed out of hatred, not even of Satan; it is a nobler fruit; it springs out of love, that love of God which is so strong as to believe all things, and, concerning the very worst, to hope all things; it is 'Christ in you, the hope of glory;' it is the essence of many prayers; it is the state of a pure heart.

At death all other possessions fail us. Interest in the surrounding world declines; reflection is enfeebled; and sensation fails. The light of genius is sometimes so resplendent, as to make a man walk through life, amid glory and acclamation; but it burns very dimly and low when carried into 'the valley of the shadow of death.' But faith is like the evening-star, shining into our souls the more brightly, the deeper is the night of death in which they sink.

'Life is to be hated only when it endangers our righteousness; only when its continuance would thwart the purpose of its gift. When the alternative is martyrdom or apostacy — God preserve us from the occasion of either — oh thou Almighty God! ——'

Here Master Asheton's emotion did stifle his words, and he wept; for he was ingenuous, and of a soul tender as a child's. He was wont to grieve concerning small errors, which most men would have esteemed innocencies: in reading the two lessons from the Scriptures, never did they remind him of a failing but he publicly blushed; and mostly, when shame of the Son of Man was mentioned, there was aroused in him an agony, bitter as that with which St Peter wept unto repentance. Some preachers there are, who will denounce the crime which they themselves committed yester-evening, and their consciences not misgive them at all, deeming their own a parallel case with an

attorney's right to prosecute the very offence himself perpetrates. Others there are, Pharisees, all whose reverence is attributable to their washerwomen's skill, and they self-satisfied with it; clerical indeed outwardly, but within full of all uncleanness. And there are other some, who persuade themselves on the pulpit-stairs, that they are going up beyond criticism, and higher than the reach of their neighbours' memories, and who shut out modesty with the pulpit door. Very unlike any of these was Master Asheton. He neither thought it right, nor could he argue the Gospel like a lawyer's brief. His contemporaries were mostly content to preach out of royal proclamations, but it was his endeavour to preach out of his conscience, and that expressed itself sometimes by repentant tears, as well as by Christian eloquence. When Master Asheton had recovered himself he proceeded thus:—

'The relations of father and mother, wife and child, brother and sister, were not ordained by God only to please us, and ought not to be indulged in with that idea; chiefly they are means for our growth in grace. Also, we must hate being absorbed with the other occupations and delights of life. They may be good, but they must minister to something better than themselves, to expanding our minds, and strengthening our integrity, and enlarging our beneficence, and quickening our faith. Every relation which we occupy hath its duties; every hour with which our lives are lengthened

out, hath its divine purpose: and the idlest word we utter hath an inclination either to good or evil. God make us ready for the judgment, for dreadful will be our fate if unprepared!

'Unprepared! It is possible! Oh grievous possibility! oh dreadful chance! When we stand at the judgment-bar, then every hypocritical covering, and every seemly veil will perish from our spirits, under the consuming fire of God's holy glance: we shall stand revealed in our deformities, and our inward corruption will no longer be hidden by a whitened outside: we shall be as Adam when expelled from Eden, or like convicted Laodiceans, and shall know ourselves to be 'wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.' Then will our fellow men stand forth and witness concerning us; one saying, 'He wronged me, and made no restitution;' and another lamenting, 'His example enticed me, and he was the corrupter of my young strength.' Next, opportunities, those bodiless voices, will be heard all around, saying, 'He knew to do good and did it not, which is sin.' Then the hours will arise in their multitudinous array, and will exclaim with one consent, 'God sent us, but chance was thanked; this man denied the divinity of our mission, whilst even by dumb nature, it was signified.' Next will be heard louder voices, attesting distinctly and in rapid succession, 'Unto this mortal's unheeding ear, day unto day, we uttered speech;' and then other more solemn speakers

will add, 'And night unto night we showed knowledge.' Simultaneously, then, and in tones loud as the sound of many waters, will the years of our lives bear dread witness, saying, 'Under us the mountains falling came to naught; and we wore away the stones: but this mortal's heart, it ever hardened itself against our touch.' The expiring voice of the earth also will testify concerning us, 'In God did all things live, and move, and have their being; but woe, woe! this human creature was ever without God in my bosom.' And lastly, the Lord Christ will give his sorrowful testimony, professing, 'I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.'

'Alas, alas! Let us awake to righteousness! May Christ present us, one and all, faultless before God's throne! And at our solemn trial, may all the earthly witness proffered be that of our good works, such as do follow the blessed dead that die in the Lord!'

When Master Asheton had brought his homily to an end, he stepped aside from the reading-desk, and sat down. After silence had prevailed a while, a physician from London inquired, 'How did it happen, sir priest, that our blessed Redeemer's words were so misunderstood?'

Master Asheton replied, 'In his own day, and for several generations afterwards, he was well understood; but when the Christian Church came to extend over large parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa,

and among nations using different languages and customs from the Saviour, then was the meaning of his words mistaken. Men did not then consider what Christ meant, so much as what his words would bear. Also, instead of debating together charitably as truth-seekers should, they persecuted one another, and thus widened their controversial differences: and at last the Imperial decision was invoked, when the Emperor delivered his opinion, maintaining it with a sword stained with the blood of a hundred battles.'

'What country, or what school was it,' asked the physician, 'which impressed these monastic ideas on the Church?'

'They arose out of the Eastern hatred of matter, as distinguished from spirit. In Afric and in the Orient, from immemorial ages, there had prevailed the doctrine that spirit was good, and matter evil by nature, and the source of all sin and suffering. The Christian Scriptures were interpreted by this doctrine, rather than by an inquiry into our Lord's own intentions; so that gradually Christianity was superseded by Popery; and the Bible being read in a heathenish spirit, duty was conceived of under the Gospel, exactly as under Gnosticism.'

'Monkery, then, was not a Roman device?'

'No,' said Master Asheton. 'Rome contributed a Pope to the Catholic Church, and Paganism furnished a priesthood and a ritual; but it was Egypt which gave birth to the first monk; and it was the

city Alexandria which educated the ancient fathers of the church. It was from the renowned and crowded schools of that city, that there spread through the Christian Church those Gnostic tendencies, which resulted finally in the Trinity, birth-sin, and the five orders of friars.'

'There is no evil like death; in what manner shall we think of it?'

How to feel concerning it was what the physician wanted, for a dogma is not comfort. Sometimes in religious doctrines, warmth is better than precision. No man ever had his faith quickened by reading the thirty-nine articles, and many have cursed their neighbours through reciting the creed of St Athanasius, but no one probably on ending it, ever blessed his God for its perusal. Theology and religion are distinct, as much so, as knowledge is from love of the truth. The physician had recently buried his only son, a righteous youth. Master Asheton therefore answered him gently, and in a soft tone, as follows: —

'Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, and in the Lord blessed also are their survivors. Christians have degenerated from the spirit in which their early brethren used to surround the tomb, solemn, reverential, and full of faith. The anniversaries of the dead are now kept like fast-days; but anciently it was far otherwise. Better Christians than we, used to speak of the seasons at which their friends gave up the ghost, as their birth-days — the first of their immortality.

'Morbid feelings concerning the dead, belong not to the Gospel, but to that hopeless heathenism with which the Church hath in every way, and these so many ages, been afflicted. I mean not that death may be lightly esteemed. All events are of God's ordinance, and death among them. Let us not think of a friend's departure, as in any way connected with chance; as if it were a small matter with God, or as though the patriarch Jacob's decease were in the book of Jehovah's remembrance no more notable than the fall of a sparrow to the ground. Men are not, for God doth take them; but indeed they exist the more truly on that account. The refreshment of their last sleep is everlasting strength: and on awaking from their unconscious rest, they discover themselves as children sometimes do, to have been clothed upon, and that with immortality.

'Immoderate grief for the dead doth betoken a weak faith: so the ancients deemed. Let not that reproach be against us. Rather let us feel that we can do all things through their love strengthening us. There have been worldlings who have looked into a brother's grave, and afterwards up to heaven in grief; and who have then seen this world, which lies between the two, in another and wiser light than it had ever been viewed in before. It was the station of love with the Pagans to watch for and inhale the last breath of the dying. Christianity doth privilege us to inherit their moral power. For in his

newness of life, many a mourner hath almost felt, as though his former feebleness were upheld by what was once the saintly strength of his buried friend. I have seen that the man who resisted his living friend's guidance, hath yet been governed by that companion's departed spirit. Many an undevout man hath been constrained to pray to God, through love of his wife or child, whom he hath believed to be at God's right hand.

'The withdrawal of a friend from our side is a special providence, even for ourselves. Never does the grave take hold of a mortal's feet, but his companion hath an omnipresent eye the while fixed on him in compassion. We should think of that eye, as well as of the hand that taketh away. Meditation on the dead quickens our faith in the unseen; for sorrow hath a sacred efficacy; there being no touch so purifying as that of a dead man's hand; and few living objects having such regenerative power, as the sight of a fellow-mortal's death.

'The Old Testament metaphors concerning death affect us more than they ought to do, more than New Testament doctrines. Let us think of God more lovingly. Is he not our Father? Heaven is his high throne, and this earth is his footstool; which while we pray, or meditate, or sit around, one by one as we fall asleep, he lifts us into his bosom, and our awaking is inside the gates of an everlasting world.

'Blessed and ever-fresh be the memories of the dead!'

With these comfortable words of Master Asheton's, the physician was much and visibly solaced.

When the service was ended, there was a man-servant of Mistress Bouchier's did solicit a person meanly-dressed, and of a hungry appearance, to refresh himself with food, to which the stranger readily assented. Now this strange man had been sent by an officer of the archbishop's, to observe and to report concerning the manner of celebrating service in Mistress Bouchier's house. It was the man's hunger which assented to his errand. Now, whilst journeying to Mistress Bouchier's house, he turned aside to rest himself in his aunt Martha's cottage, she being the old woman to whom Sir Francis Farel gave such munificent alms. 'He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth to theLord.' And often we are unaware of the speed with which the Lord repays. His old aunt's joy made this man hate himself, on account of the bad business to which, with much instigation, the archbishop's officer had persuaded him. Poor Freeth was desperate through excessive poverty; and at length he became jealous of his aunt's happiness, and left her cottage, reasoning within himself, 'What hath want to do with honour? They are only rich men are noble. First a man must live, and then may he deck out his conduct with laudable colours. Food first, and then praise.'

But a better spirit was confirmed in him while worshipping in the house of the lady whom he had

come to betray; so that on returning to the neighbourhood of Lambeth, he assured the archbishop's officer that worship had been very righteously conducted at Rivington Hall; and reported also such other matters as, though perfectly true, did nevertheless incline the bigotted chaplain to imagine that Mistress Bouchier might, even like himself, be secretly disposed to Popery.

CHAPTER VIII.

'Lord of all that's fair to see!
Come, reveal thyself to me;
Let me, mid thy radiant light,
View thine unveiled glories bright.

Let thy Deity profound
Me in heart and soul surround;
From my mind its idols chase,
Weaned from joys of time and place.'

JOHANN SCHEFFLER.

In the afternoon, Master Brandon and Sir Francis Farel accompanied their hostess and her sister into the park, which afforded, among its trees, many pretty vistas, and several enchanting views into adjacent valleys; one of which was of marvellous beauty, the hill-sides being covered with stately elms, while in the meadow-land, at the bottom, there ran a winding streamlet of clear water, whence the grass and the flowers derived such freshness, as prolonged their spring-time of bright tints through the dry summer months quite into the latter days of autumn. The merlin and mavis were wont to sing there longer than in most other spots; and, when startled, would scream with such a wild delight, while flying further off, as would, for an instant, surprise even an unthankful heart into glad-

ness. It was a scene to wish to live in for a life; yet, doubtless, it would not universally be good, or human families could each one of them have been provided with like dwelling-spots, as easily as the elephant was with his deep, dark forests; or in the same manner as the antelope had allotted him his vast, luxuriant plains to bound over; or just as the eagles have each pair of them an eyrie, whence are visible plains, undulating hills, forests, lakes, the courses of rivers, and the sailing of light and of dark clouds, over, it may be, a quarter of a kingdom.

The common Creator could have devised a natural home for man, as readily as for the most favoured beast of the field, and could have caused the earth to have produced his sustenance as spontaneously as that of the brutes; for a cave is not a harder creation than a fen, nor a rose than a thistle, nor a fruit-tree than a bramble-bush, nor wheat than darnel.

Difficulty is God's ordinance: there is divine purpose in it, — visible enough here, but it will be indisputable hereafter. The beasts have not to labour as men have, because the greater end of labour is a moral end, and, therefore, does not exist for them. The harvest of human toil is twofold; one in autumn of corn and fruit, and in the end of the world another richer one, that of the moral results of labour — being the virtues fostered thereby, together with their accompanying rewards.

For man, effort is the appointed condition of almost all good, and labour the necessary means to all excellence; as though work were one way of man's manifesting the Creator's image, — culture being not unlike the creation of thought, and, in appearance, the rearing resembling much the creating of plants and herbs.

God's sentence on man was not the wantonness of tyranny, but an omniscient device for human help; 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the earth, eating of it in sorrow all the days of thy life.' For the hardship of the sentence is transformed into mercy on knowing that 'blessed are they that mourn.' Labour and sorrow, the punishment of the fall, are co-operating aids in salvation now.

The necessity of toil is as peculiarly a human distinction as reason is. The greater man's intelligence, the more evident is his tendency to self-exertion; just as almightiness is the concomitant attribute of omniscience, on earth and in heaven, and in one and all of its infinite manifestations.

The noblest human work is a cathedral: the sight of it exciting emotions not unlike those of sublime scenery; for within the building the spirit of the architecture is the same with that of deep and silent forests: it is irresistibly felt to be such in advancing from the western door of an edifice into an avenue of high and graceful pillars. And in like manner, externally, the pointed windows

carry up the view to the pinnacles above, and the pinnacles send the spectator's attention up to the towers, awakening in the mind the sensation of alpine sublimity. It cannot be felt otherwise than that a minster is in beauty, an embodiment almost of like principles with those on which the world is constructed, is a microcosm of nature, a noble evidence of man's, in his purer state, still retaining God's image. Visibly, the inmost soul of art is religion — knowledge of, love for, and sympathy with divine principles; it will be known to be so with science sometime, and with labour also.

Agriculture was almost the only peaceful business which the Romans accounted consistent with their dignity; other pursuits they reckoned servile, but farming they jealously reserved for themselves. What idea they had in this arrangement, or could have, cannot now be well divined.

Tillage was a primeval occupation: it was Adam's in Eden; and, after his expulsion thence, he still practised it, — and by many pious men, in many countries and in many ages, it has been accounted as being peculiarly conducive to righteousness. Certainly communion with God is more practicable in fields and meadows, and amid the creatures of His hands, than in towns and in shops, among objects of man's own making. Of the occupations in a city, many are on luxurious objects, and partake themselves of the questionable character of their ends, and many others tend to contract and debili-

tate the mind; but country labour is invigorating and pristine; it is congenial with thought, solemn thought; and it operates in concert with higher than human allies, working together with the elements, and, in their turn, with each of the four seasons; under whose mysterious agency, governable to some extent by man, though inscrutable by his eye, soil is transmuted into waving woods, and dust and dew-drops into pendulous fruit.

'Work and pray,' is the legend of some religious, the author whereof must have discerned the sacred meaning of which labour is susceptible. The irreligiousness of present modes of thinking is very lamentably evinced in the reputed meanness of labour. However, husbandry and warfare will, some season, have their positions inverted; just as the executioner's is an opprobrious office now, instead of being a covetable post, as in some former times. In the eye of an angel, and in the world, as it ought to be, the scars of labour would be accounted as infinitely more honourable than those of battle, and a harvest of corn as a nobler achievement than knighthood, — culture of the earth, when worthily interpreted, embodying, no doubt, a sublimer idea than does the destruction of men, however valiantly done.

Though contrary to common judgment, yet the very destitution of the circumstances into which man is born is itself a sign of his divinely instituted pre-eminence. The lower animals, by their instincts,

which speedily mature, find themselves easily provisioned with subsistence; but man, gifted with God's likeness, is ordained to create about him his own world, of which indeed the elements are furnished him, but whereof the form is his own moulding, and so intended to be.

How differently the model of the social world may be conceived of, is apparent in the variety of sentiments, institutions, and customs which obtain in divers countries, for these are man's world; and in the several kinds of civilization which are known to have existed, Jewish and Asiatic, Grecian, Roman, and European.

Were easiness of condition the favourable, it would have been the undoubted lot of all men: but neither the one nor the other is the case. Tempe was the loveliest valley of a lovely land, but it is not famed for any illustrious birth or deed.

On evergreen banks, and amid beautiful scenery, we may not all inhabit, and we cannot; but we all may do better, by each one of us opening in his soul a well of living water, springing up for us, into more than mortal life. There are many who have done it betimes, and who have experienced the stream of their lives running among the pleasantnesses of youth, through manhood, and along the road of old age, right into the ocean of eternity, and the last day as pure as ever, and as gladsome also and fresh to the feeling.

There are righteous men who think to evince

their piety by a profession of world-weariness; but, really, they never feel it, for it is the punishment of the worst of sinners. It is sensuality which is monotonous and wearying; but when we are in Christ Jesus, what new discoveries we attain to of grace and truth, and day after day, through our Christian course, how old things pass away, and all things are evermore becoming new!

The preceding is a brief and very unworthy account of the sentiments with which Mistress Bouchier delighted her guests, whilst they walked with her in the park. On coming to a majestic oak, with benches nigh it, Sir Francis Farel entreated Mistress Bouchier that they might rest a short space; which being assented to, they placed the seats under the oak-tree, the low boughs of which stretched out above their heads like a leafy ceiling, while under their feet the grass was soft and much intermingled with moss, and was as pleasant to tread upon as are those far-famed carpets of the Saracens; and around them there was that deep silence with which the woods are pervaded in the hotter hours of those afternoons, when neither breeze, bird, nor animal stirs, and when there is no sound heard louder than the hum of flies sporting together in the shade. There are souls which do thrill to this felt silence more powerfully than even to the peal of thunder; but why it is so can only be mysteriously answered, if it can be at all. Is it that there is any similarity between the stillness of nature

now and the great calm into which the elements hushed themselves the first hour of creation, when God was about speaking to the earth, at that time without form and void — those same being the elements out of which our frames are compounded, and on the face of which the spirit of God once moved amid the silence of expectant angels? Certainly there is a somewhat divine in the silence of the fields, and in that which is experienced on the tops of high hills, with the stars in sight. Such silence feels like the solemnity which the prophet Moses must have known when he was in the mount — a mortal waiting for the Lord God to speak.

After Mistress Jane and her friends had sat a while under the oak tree, Sir Francis said, 'At such a season as this, in the country, how mean seem those concerns which are the main attention of citizens; and, especially, how odious are jealousy and competition felt to be!'

Mistress Emma replied, 'The country is sweet, yet hath the town its advantages also, and such as may not be dispensed with in the culture of the mind. I doubt not but that trade is of God's ordinance, as well as are the seasons; and, rightly used, I suppose that it may even favour spiritual growth.'

Then said Sir Francis, 'And will you also, fair mistress, find piety in those irreligious quarrels, with which the city, the court, and the church, are so distraught?'

'Scarcely so.'

'Or will you think that any good can result from episcopal persecutions; or that peace is favoured by episcopal divisions?'

At this time Mistress Bouchier, at the instance of a servant, rose to return to the house during a brief space, for the purpose of dispensing medicine to the daughter of a cottager, whose father had that morning been attacked with ague.

'Sister, sister!' Mistress Emma exclaimed, 'is the parable, the apologue, the vision, which you read to me on Thursday, is it in the green summer-house still? Then, till my sister's return, let us repair thither: and Sir Francis, if I may not convince you, I will yet put you to silence.'

The summer-house was nigh at hand; which, when they had entered and were sat down in, Mistress Emma drew open a drawer, and taking thence a manuscript, said, 'This paper of my sister's composition, she wrote after hearing the narrative, which, a physician, an aged and godly man, related to her, of an affliction which once befel him in the East and which occurred on the last of his many voyages in those parts: and previous to the commencement of which, he narrowly escaped punishment, as a heretic at London, owing to the treachery of the suffragan bishop of Negropont, who did once in private, and in the manner of a friend, very importunately urge him upon some points of faith; for owing to its having been rumoured as the physi-

cian's opinion, that war was an unlawful profession, the bishop was induced to doubt the physician's religion; suspecting also that he might have contracted heretical taint by his much sojourning with Mussulmen. Listen now to this apologue, for so I call it, although, I suppose, that it is hardly such.'

Mistress Emma then read the following in a low, sweet tone.

'One evening a company of travellers dismounted from their dromedaries, and began to pitch their tents beside a well in the desert.

'Suddenly a band of Bedouin Arabs made an assault on the tired travellers, who, after a short resistance were overcome, and were left lying on the sand as dead.

'When the travellers were first attacked, one of them, an Englishman, was a little space apart from his companions gathering fuel; and became apprised of danger only by the sudden tumult, amid which his friends all perished.

'At the first alarm he drew a weapon from his girdle, with which he had opportunity to have killed the nearest Arab; but he restrained his hand, thinking within himself, 'The destruction of one enemy would not be my deliverance, and an unavailing death would be a murder. My God! my God! quickly shall I be at thy bar, beseeching mercy; and I would not wish to be preceded thither by a soul whom my hand has just hindered for ever of

repentance, having hurried it away in all the blackness of recent crime.'

'Whilst the traveller was thinking thus he threw his weapon from him. A few moments afterwards, the leader of the band rushed at the traveller, his green mantle streaming behind him. Mahomet's descendant had perceived the Englishman spare one of his followers, and, but for the heat of action, he would himself have spared the traveller; as it was, his hesitation weakened his blow, but the Englishman nevertheless fell lifeless on the sand.

'When the traveller revived, the evening-star had disappeared.

'At first he was uncertain whether he was on this earth or off it; for as he sat on the desert, the sands glittering under a full moon, seemed not unlike the waters of the sea; and there was utter silence round him, unbroken by even as much noise as the wing of the night-moth makes.

'But on looking towards the half-finished tents, he saw that he was alone on the desert, with nine human bodies.

'And he crawled with pain from one corpse to another, and when he came to the last, he wrung his hands in anguish, and exclaimed, 'My child, my child, my brother's child!'

'Many scenes of battle and murder the traveller had witnessed in his life, but nothing had ever appeared so horrible as sitting on the desert alone at midnight, the dead body of his nephew beside

him, and with that murdered company lying round him.

'His nephew was the traveller's only relative, and was greatly beloved by his uncle, for he was almost as loving and pure in spirit as the apostle John.

'The traveller's anguish bewildered his reason, and he said within himself, 'And now thou also art perished. O, my child, have our lives been delusions? Singularly religious as thou wert, was there no God nigh to prevent thy murder? My child! my child! is there no God at all? Lord pardon me: Lord help mine unbelief: Lord preserve me!'

'In his agony the traveller covered his face with his hands; and when he removed them, it seemed as though the angel Faith stood beside him.

'The angel raised him from the sand, and said to him, 'Sorely, very sorely, art thou tried.'

'Now there is in the desert a spot sacred from human intrusion: it is the earthly dwelling-place of the angel Peace.

'When the heavenly choir were returning home after having sung on earth the advent of the Lord Jesus, one of them, the angel Peace, entreated to remain on earth and co-operate with the Gospel. But there was no resting-place for her in any habitable region, since everywhere every foot of land worth possessing, was the object either of violence or jealousy; and she needed some quiet place whither to retire at seasons, and refresh her wearied spirit.

'So there was allotted her a small space in the desert, and her presence made it blossom like the rose.

'There is no alternation there of night and day; nor does there exist there the twilight contention of the two; for it has an atmosphere like the city of God, and has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it.

'And there exists a power round it, which unperceived turns every human foot aside, and which softens every wild beast that passes through it; the lamb there might dwell with the wolf, and the leopard and the kid lie down together. Sometimes the vulture pounces down from above the clouds, but through sweet enchantment, lights harmlessly on some lofty tree among the unfrightened doves.

'To this paradise was the traveller conveyed by the angel.

'And as they walked therein, the traveller saw a lovely maiden through the trees.

'But when they came to her it was the angel Peace; and she was kneeling under an ancient olive-tree, with her hands clasped, and her head sunk upon her breast.

'The traveller wept, so unutterably mournful seemed her attitude.

'And the angel Faith took her clasped hands in his, and said, 'Bless thee, sweetest sufferer.'

'And opening her eyes, she said, 'Brother, my brother.' And she arose and embraced him.

'And he said to her, 'Why wert thou so troubled, sister?'

'And she answered, 'For wars and rumours of wars.'

'And he said, 'These thou art accustomed to; for never have they ceased one hour since the voice of Abel's blood first cried unto heaven from the ground. Sister, what new grief is thine?'

'And she asked, 'Dost thou not know how latterly religious names have been converted into watchwords of war; and the Gospel been made ground, on which armies meet and fight?'

'Whereupon the angel Faith replied, 'This all is no worse than the slaughters and oppressions which Christian priests have perpetrated for more than a thousand years. Whence, then, thy unusual anguish, sweetest sister?'

'Then she made answer in a tremulous tone, and said, 'There is a family, once the most blessed of the human race; awhile ago, the happiness of one another was their mutual concern; they had all one object, one mind, and one faith. Oh! they were Christians, and they were my dear delight. But now the father is divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother. In my grief I have almost despaired of the power of goodness; and have been tempted to distrust the meaning of that prophecy, the utterance of which once made heaven ring with joy—that the king-

doms of this world should become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and that they should reign forever. At thy coming I was in an agony of dread, lest, perhaps, this might never, never be.'

'The angel Faith then said, 'Good sister, without my presence nigh thee, these earthly trials are some of them, as I know, greater than thy strength. Alas, I wonder not that purest spirits are sometimes bewildered here, so hardly does heaven's light reach this world lying in darkness; so full of illusions is it, and of all spiritual assaults. Heaven is insulted as wantonly as though it were empty; and at times the laws of rectitude are broken so lightly as in weak minds almost to suggest the doubt, whether there exists any eternal power to give them energy.'

'The angel turned to the traveller, and continued, 'Thou wert so afflicted as to doubt Providence itself; like as my sister's sorrow obscured her belief in that prophecy, the glory of which is her very life.'

'The angel Peace reclined upon her brother Faith, and placing her hand in his, she was comforted and was joyful.

'And then she strove to console the traveller; and her words were in his ear like the first sounds which bless the departed soul on reaching the gates of heaven.

'And as the traveller humbly looked up to her countenance and listened, he felt his soul within him calmed and blessed.

'After she had ceased speaking, the angel Faith said to her, 'Now is thine anguish assuaged, but not forgotten; for as I feel thou wilt sometime remember it as the beginning of intensest joy. The contention in the earth, which grieves thee, is not so much between good men and evil men, as between the good that is in all men, and the evil from which the holiest are not exempt. If, in religion, fathers are divided against their sons, it is, that struggling separately after nobler truth, they may be reunited in its attainment, more perfectly than before. There is not one controversial word which grieves thy gentle spirit, but contributes to a better peace than the quiet which it breaks. There is no truth or happiness among men, but has to be secured through suffering. Evil, the certain means to good, is one of the mysteries, of which this world of the human race is full; things which we may desire to look into, but which we will never despair concerning; and if they exceed our comprehension, let them not at least transcend our belief.'

'The last sentence the angel spoke, directing his look towards the traveller, also he continued thus, 'Blessed are those mortals who can accept suffering from Providence, as a pledge for the certainty of retribution hereafter. Blessed are they whom renewed sorrow attaches to God the more closely. The purest spirits which have been welcomed into heaven from earth, have most of them been fresh from affliction, some from the dungeon,

some from the stake, where they had been enrobed in flame, and some from other scenes of trial, whence we had often seen them uplift their tearful eyes in trust.'

'The traveller's heart was filled with awe and gladness: the world and all things therein, life, and all its occurrences, had then and thenceforth a changed appearance in his eyes.

'Soon afterwards, he was joined in company to a band of hadjis, returning from Mecca to the city of Cairo.

'After journeying together some hours, there was discerned by its glittering, the marble summit of an Egyptian ruin: whereupon the hadjis covered their heads, and thought on Mahomet: but it was in a holier name that the English traveller folded his hands, while looking up to heaven and blessing God for deliverance.

'Subsequently the traveller tasted largely of God's goodness: but he no longer regarded it as the only or the chief proof of Providence: nor any longer did crime seem to impugn the Divine Government; for, from his own abhorrence of iniquity, he had learned to infer the intensity of the Divine Holiness; and the wider grew the difference between his saintly spirit and the world's wicked doings, the firmer became his faith in God over all; since he accounted that the long-suffering of our Lord was salvation and not apathy.

''Call upon me in the day of trouble,' God saith,

'so will I deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.' In affliction God doth always administer proportionate help, either by miracle or otherwise; and but for that help, there are experiences in this world strange enough almost to confound the very angels; for this earth is such, that even the Son of Man could send on it, not peace, but a sword. Life is a wrestle, a death-struggle between the soul and the world; wherein there is no drawn battle, but in which the spirit is more than conqueror, or else perishes: legions of earthly aids are inadequate to its help; this only being 'the victory, that overcometh the world, even our faith.'

'In the spiritual church, there are no side entrances, as there sometimes are in those which are made of stone and man's device; the gate surnamed Faith is the only door; and through it none are either able or are permitted to enter, but such as do take up Christ's cross at the portal, in Christ's strength to follow in.

'Discipleship with Christ is that of the cross. Self-sacrifice is the appointed and appropriate service of that church, which has Christ's blood for the seal of its covenant, and mount Calvary for its high altar; and which for its elder disciples counts the souls of them that were killed for the word of God, and for the testimony which they maintained.

'It is only by welcoming every approach of Faith, that the blessed and all-blessing life of the sister virtue Peace can be sustained in the human heart.

'Some souls there are, in which philosophy can create peace, arguing first one passion, and then another, into quiet, and reasoning discontentment into silence: but mostly, it is a calm only suitable to solitude: for the presence of an enemy breaks it; so does any share in social business; so does the sight of a coveted object, and commonly so will any one of the ten thousand temptations with which man is environed; the multitudinousness of their character evincing the religious necessity of his. A philosophic is only a temporary calm; for permanent peace among the passions of the carnal mind is not possible. The soul's affections are not to be stifled, but to be sanctified: and Reason cannot do it; for it is only Faith, that can. Holy power, divinest grace, omnipresent as God himself! It waits round each human being, his life through; sometimes solemnly urging a right of entrance into his heart, and at other times, and until death, patiently lingering for an opportunity; and such an occasion is every act of prayer. It is in this opening of the spirit's inmost recesses to divine inspection, that angel powers find their ingress; and chief and readiest among them, Faith, the restorer of the soul's declining faculties, the Saviour's vicegerent for administering in every time of need, that precious gift of his to man, which he bequeathed when in sight of death, saying 'Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you.''

When Mistress Emma concluded, there were tears in her eyes: for the perusal of her sister's pa-

per had recalled the memory of Mistress Anne Askew, her friend.

Sir Francis said, 'I thank you, Mistress Emma;' and Mistress Jane having returned, he added, 'Your sentiments confirm me in the opinion, that Martyrdom doth betoken a higher spiritual state among Christians than among the Greeks; with whom it was a mere bracing of the nerves and hardening of the will, or at best only high self-respect; but into Christian Martyrdom, other elements enter, and among the rest, such a fulness of tender feeling, as would have weakened and swept away the lower motives, on which Grecian martyrs stayed themselves. Among the heathens, the spirit of martyrdom was endurance: but among Christians, it is benediction: the difference between the two is the same as between Zeno, the philosopher, and Christ on the cross, praying 'Father forgive them.'

'How marvellous it seems,' said Master Brandon, 'that ever men should have doubted the efficacy of prayer, after having heard that supplication of our blessed Lord's, or even after having rightly conceived of the circumstances amid which it was breathed.'

'No doctrine,' Mistress Jane said, 'has been oftener or more strangely perverted in its use, than that of the Divine Immutability. It has been made to lend strength to every other religious error: God's ways having been deemed without mercy because without change.'

'We know not the mode of God's omniscience,'

said Master Brandon, 'and therefore still less ought we to reason on the manner of his immutability, which is the result thereof.'

'Commonly,' said Mistress Jane, 'men have contemplated the everlasting hills, as so completely emblematical of the Divine unchangeableness, as that God's immutability has been allowed, in their minds, to petrify all his other attributes into inaction. Unvariableness, misunderstood, has been the source or exaggerating circumstance of most theological errors, especially of the more serious. There are Christians, who think to honour God, as the Immutable, by worshipping him, in some such mood, as that in which idolaters once adored the grey and flinty rocks. Such worship no more blesses the Christian soul, than it did the Druid's. Theologians have been too apt to represent Providence as a curious mechanism, infallible, indeed, but unfeeling — a machinery for whirling one man aloft into station, and depressing another into hopeless poverty, or else fore-ordained damnation. But the finite cannot comprehend the Infinite, nor man find out the Almighty unto perfection: nor can mortal vision ever take in a view of the Creator's character wide enough to be unerrably correct: but some modes of viewing it are truer than others. The immutable attribute must not be esteemed as the most prominent characteristic of the Deity. See yonder winged insect: it is an ephemera: it is intimately concerned with the heat of the sun, but not at all with its du-

ration; since before sunset it will itself have perished everlastingly: so our finite state, in regard to the attributes of the Infinite, is not affected by all of them alike, nor can be. The idea of God's unchangeableness may enter into the theology of archangels more largely and with more propriety than into ours. It is not the proposal of the Gospel to make us predestinarians, but rather 'followers together of God as dear children.' There was some resemblance in mind between St Augustin and St Paul: but St Austin dwells too emphatically on Fore-knowledge; and thence partly the difference between Paul's epistles and Augustin's meditations. In the Scriptures, it is never said God is fate, God is Power, God is revenge, in the same manner, in which it is written by St John the Divine, that God is Love. It is for us Christians to think that God is Love rather than Destiny; for that would be a heathen thought. If we cannot conceive the consistent co-existence of the attributes: plainly it is for us to think that Immutability is restricted by love, and not mercy by fate.'

'We think of God,' said Master Brandon, 'as King, Judge, Master, and in all other ways, than as that Father in Heaven, which he is.'

Mistress Jane replied, 'It is because the paternal is the loftiest view of the Divine character. All men can conceive of God as a King: but they are only those, into whose hearts has entered the spirit of adoption, who can feel towards him as the Father of Spirits.'

'Almighty God be blessed for Jesus Christ!' Master Brandon said. 'The question of free-will, necessity, and predestination, may never perhaps be settled. Bare statements of doctrine, even those of the Scriptures, men as often interpret by their prejudices as by their knowledge; and often and often would philosophy persuade to the adoption of some partial dogma as the ideal of Deity: but to correct all error on the Godhead, we have but to look into the Lord Christ's face, and see shining therein 'the light of the knowledge of the glory of God.'

Mistress Emma, addressing Sir Francis, asked, 'Is the controversy on free-will subsided in Germany? A few years since there came thence to visit us a friend, who bitterly bewailed the estrangements which it caused.'

'It is ended, now,' answered Sir Francis, 'and I am glad of it: for I neither was, nor wished to be interested therein.'

'Why, Francis friend,' said Master Brandon, 'how canst thou justify contempt of so important a discussion, as that of Erasmus and Luther, and which their two churches did regard as comprehending the fountain-head of their differences.'

'I agree. Dr Luther did esteem his opinion therein, as the main weapon of the Protestant Church-militant: but then he said, that St Jerome's salvation was endangered thereby; and I was satisfied, that it could be no Christian doctrine, or

at least no Christian use of it, which could ever emperil the best of the fathers.'

'Well, but what was Luther's judgment concerning St Jerome?' Master Brandon inquired.

'That he would have been damned for his interpretation of the epistle to the Romans, but for some special grace. For myself, I should differ from both the Latin father and the Saxon reformer; for I think that the will is precisely that one faculty of the mind concerning which we cannot judge. The disputes which concern free-will have always seemed to me as irrational as though men were to distrust their eye-sight, because they had never seen their own eyes, or as though a person should fret his life out because he cannot tell by what means it is kept in. What conclusions has your mind rested in upon this matter, Mistress Jane?'

'To my mind, both necessity and liberty are alike demonstrable. Reconcile them I cannot; still, I believe in their consistency; for in heaven, if not on earth, there must be some point of view, whence the two doctrines are visibly compatible; but, doubtless, it is from some station nigher God's throne than this earth is. Free-will and predestination are verbal opposites; and necessity and liberty are material opposites: but they are not therefore spiritual contraries, for that they may, in man's personality, and do therein converge I can well imagine, since the mental powers do not work in the manner of mechanism. The faculties of the

soul, as I think, are of such nature and so combined as that, in their action together, is realized the harmonious confluence of those apparent opposites, the forces of free-will and divine necessity. However, it is a profound mystery. It has been the cause of bitterest controversies; but with us and our friends let it occasion other feelings — for, whenever we verge towards the boundaries of human knowledge, instead of straining our eyes into the thick darkness beyond, let us rather look back into what Christian light we have, and, uplifting our hands, bless God for the contrast.'

'Would that Master Calvin, the Genevese pastor, would do so,' said Sir Francis, 'for his Institutes of Religion are very mournful reading, not to say worse. He lays down God's absolute decree as a foundation-stone, and dreadful is his religious superstructure; no temple of thanksgiving is it, but a spiritual torture-house for his followers.'

'It is strange,' Master Brandon remarked, 'how much more exclusively theologians have built on the divine unvariableness than on divine love, and how confidently they have insisted on theirs as the sole doctrines honorable to God.'

'There have been divines,' Mistress Jane answered, 'who have insisted on the perfection of God's knowledge, in such manner as to make it an imperfection of his nature; arguing for human damnation as an essential of the divine honour; for the vindication of which they imagine that they

and their co-believers are a competent tribunal. It is said by some that man's offended honour may allow of such satisfaction as the divine honour could not accept, thereby subjecting Providence to restrictions, sterner even and more numerous than their own necessities. Often the new religionists do analyze the divine character by means of metaphysics, and then pronounce on Providence after the manner of an alchymist, making experiments on metal by the aid of fire and a crucible. There are many believers, who seem to forget, that God is a free agent as well as themselves, and that while free-will is possibly a human, it is most certainly a divine attribute.'

'Yet,' said Master Brandon, 'God doth himself observe laws — those of righteousness.'

'Doubtless,' Mistress Jane answered; 'yet the Deity is righteousness itself, rather than subject to righteous laws. They are the more imperfect natures which think first what righteousness is; purer spirits think righteously without a thought concerning the commandments. Moral likeness is nobler than submision to God, for it implies obedience, and is itself a something loftier. Laws are but the manner of wise living. The Lord Christ's life was a law-giving, and so, in a minor manner, ought ours to be — to be ensamples. Our actions ought to be of such a nature, as that, through them, the divine laws may publish themselves in our neighbourhood anew—Christ in us, the Scriptures style it. The

sight of a righteous life is more convincing than the perusal of the commandments, however sharply the ten may be cut in tables of stone. Often the spirit of the laws is nobler than themselves; so that, in reasoning on what we suppose are scriptural doctrines, we must reject those conclusions, however rigidly deduced, which do militate against the God who gave the Bible, for such clashing doth imply that we have not correctly understood the Scriptures. The doctrine of regeneration is interpreted sometimes like a forbidding bar between little children and the Father Almighty; but one glimpse of the Father, such as Jesus showeth him, doth satisfy the doubter that their angels must always behold his face in heaven. O, how true it has ever been that no man cometh unto the Father but through the Son! Not a Christian age but has verified it! Many times have philosophers, searching after God, mistaken some metaphysical dogma for Deity, but in no long while their successors have had to disown it as an insufficiency and an idol. — And when believers seek God by the help of ecclesiastical traditions, they see him indeed, but it is commonly in a cold and illusive light. To come unto the Father, we must needs go with the Son; to know him as the Son knew him, we must accompany the Lord Christ, rejoicing with him, and sorrowing also, listening to him, as he would have us listen, in no slavish, but in a joyous and free spirit, and watching and praying with him; and after thus

possessing ourselves of his ever-blessed spirit, that text of Scripture would be accomplished upon us, — 'I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.'

Soon after the end of this conversation, Master Brandon, with Sir Francis Farel, commenced returning home; but in the latter part of the way, Master Brandon proposed to Sir Francis to call at the manor-house of Master John Welburn, saying, — 'It is my Sunday-evening custom to do so.'

Master Brandon found the old man sitting out of doors, and said, 'Good evening, good neighbour! Are you well in health to-day?'

'Thank God, Willoughby, I am,' answered Master Welburn; 'and so are you, as I judge by your voice. I was satisfied the dandelion-decoction would do thee good. I am right glad to hear thy voice in strength again. Be advised now to go a-fowling. It is a good, breathing sport, thou wilt find. I am told of an act just passed against shooting water-birds with hand guns and grape-shot. I am glad of it, and trust the act will be enlarged next Parliament; for fowling with a hand-gun is not skill, such as befits a man to show, but a base butchering of innocent and often beautiful birds. I would, I could persuade thee to fowling, Willoughby, for it is a healthful pastime and lawful; inasmuch as, when rightly practised, it is a mere circumvention of birds, accomplished by the help of art, and fairly done also; since they themselves

employ craft against one another, and superior velocity of wing, like the hawk and the grey-backed shrike. I am right glad to think thee better, Willoughby. But who is your companion?'

'Sir Francis Farel of Mayence.'

'Sir Francis, I have often heard Willoughby speak concerning you.'

'I think,' said Sir Francis, 'that I remember to have seen you, many years ago, at Curzon-Court. A very pretty garden and grounds are these of yours; and what a magnificent sunset! By having your chair set out here, you seem to love the sight.'

'Sir Francis, I have had no sight this long time. You are starting with surprise, I think. Nay! I am no great subject for compassion. I am no ways miserable; for though I can no longer see the sun, I thank God that I can feel it still, and further into my soul's depths, than formerly. 'It is good for me that I have been afflicted.' The deprivation of one sense has made me more grateful for the remaining four. It is five years since I saw the sun; but Almighty God be thanked, though it does not dazzle my eye now, it daily warms my heart, and that with a power which does not vary with summer and winter; fostering therein a growing assurance of God's great goodness.'

'That of eye-sight is a grievous loss,' Sir Francis remarked.

'Until reconciled thereto,' answered Master Wel-

burn. 'However, for a man of threescore years and ten, the chief part of his remaining journey is down a valley, in which bodily eyes are of no avail — that I mean of the shadow of death; into which I have already entered, and of the waters of which I have drunk, as my feebleness may attest; but God's goodness be praised, though mortal, I have not found them bitter.'

'You seem so placid, as you sit here in your oak-chair, in the golden light of the setting sun. You seem so calm.'

'I am glad of it; for it is so, I would wish to look. A sour countenance I have always abominated; but under God's afflictions, a discontented face is a kind of blasphemy, I think; is practically an impeachment of Providence, which wise men may laugh at, and good men lament, but also, which may tend to poison the religion of children and of weak-minded persons, some of whom exist in or nigh almost every household. It is not right, I know — Willoughby will explain that — but so it is, that in men's minds religion is associated with sorrow more than pleasure: so that spectators do not anticipate being reminded of religion by the look of a king, or the procession of a lordly retinue, or by the words of the worldly happy; but they expect it in the faces of the afflicted, and in the words of sufferers; in such persons, therefore, a cheerful aspect is a religious duty; it is divine service; and among spectators is an attractive sermon of no mean power.'

'Well, your expression is that of peace itself; and your temper seems also rightly ordered.'

'Try it first, Sir Francis.'

'At least you seem to have quite silenced the more violent passions and discontents.'

'By God's help, I trust, I have at last; else, before setting my house in order, I had disregarded several serious warnings; but on my eyes growing dark, I knew that death must be drawing on apace. When conscience began solemnly to sound the curfew-bell of life; there was in my soul more than one unlawful fire burning, and there remained besides the smouldering embers of my youthful passions; but some I trampled out violently in an agony of dread, others I have wept over often, and quenched with tears; and hereafter, should God Almighty discover in any chamber of my soul the unextinguished remains of some forbidden passion, as doubtless God must and will, then I humbly trust in his subduing grace for the final extinction thereof. 'Blessed is he whose wickedness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered.'

'Blindness,' Sir Francis said, 'is commonly imagined to be a hindrance to all self-improvement, but you, sir, have not found it so.'

'With me it has been much otherwise. I have more serious reflection now in the space of a month, than I was acquainted with before in twenty years. With the exclusion of the outer world, I have found the inner one disclose itself more distinctly, and

widen into an unthought of extent; I would, I could tell you, of the sublime heights, and of the depths of mystery, which I have discovered therein; but they seem as though they were to be felt only, and not spoken of. Destitute of bodily vision, observation has concentred its power in the eye within, and acquainted me with the workings of the soul, the occasions of sin, and the means to holiness, in such a manner as I can never enough praise God for. Also, I often walk to and fro in the store-house of memory, amongst astounding crowds of remembrances; and I select from among them sometimes one and sometimes another class to reason upon, and pray concerning; and thus, day by day, am I enabled to convert barren information into spiritual wisdom.'

'I can well imagine that your deprivation has its alleviating circumstances.'

'Oh! very grievous was the loss at first; but the pain of it diminished every day. Before my own experience of blindness I deemed it burial alive; but it is not. My remaining senses have been much strengthened since my loss of sight. My hearing is very acute now. And, if my observation cannot be exercised by the world any longer, my feelings are, for God seems nigher to my soul now than in times past; and the mystery of existence appears to me a greater marvel at present, than I ever remember to have felt it before. My heart is more tender than it was, so that the very wind seems to

me to have more awe in its blast, and every event of life to have a deeper meaning in its occurrence, now than formerly.'

'I never thought there were such resources in the soul, but memory is not the least abundant I suppose.'

'The most important I was about saying; but it is not; however, it is next after the idea of God. Doctrines we remember, but God himself we live and move in; a truth which my helpless condition has made the more palpable. My increase of faith is a wealth which I would not exchange for the eye-sight of youth.'

'You have felt your trust in God, then, the stronger for your need of him.'

'I have. Man is cheated by his senses, in many ways: but the worst illusion of all is allowing the invisibility of the Godhead to weaken its certainty. But when all things are hidden by blindness alike, there is an end then of such incredulity; and the soul shut in upon itself, instinctively claims a God for its reverence. I often sit alone for two or three hours together, and sometimes I think of the heavenly heights above me, and the immeasurable depths beneath, and of the boundless space surrounding me; and when also I think of my heart as a central point in this infinity around, the thought of God then swells therein with irresistible conviction. And when I reflect on the powers of the world working in their accustomed way, and on the pow-

ers of nature, raging as they sometimes do, with such terrific force, then I become conscious of a helplessness unutterable: but this very sense of my own feebleness, have I found a preparation for faith, and a constraining element towards the belief of Almightiness above. Sir Francis, I doubt whether there ever was a blind man who disbelieved the being of a God.'

After leaving Master Welburn's house, Master Brandon said, 'Do you know that Master Welburn is my relative?'

'I could have guessed it,' answered Sir Francis.

'Tell me why.'

'Not on account of any similarity in your persons; but because it is so plain that your minds are of one family.'

'Master Welburn was my father's cousin.'

'His conversation has edified me much. His very aspect is a homily upon patience. The Romans accounted stones and trees struck by lightning sacred; and with at least as much reverence, ought we Christians to venerate human beings, that are stricken of God and afflicted, especially when the Divine image has been thereby brought out, and brightened on their souls. Did you see that little child in the cottage, praying at its mother's feet; and for beauty and devotion, she is herself not unlike a Madonna? Look back, Willoughby, and see.'

The remaining part of their way home, Master

Brandon and Sir Francis talked together on the necessity of becoming as little children, before entering the kingdom of heaven. Master Brandon did not speak much, for he was tired; Sir Francis, however, conversed freely; his sentiments being not unlike those old verses of his fellow countryman, Gerhard Tersteegen's.

'Soul! couldst thou, while on earth remaining
A child-like frame be still retaining:
With thee, e'en here, I know full well,
God and his Paradise would dwell.

'Oh childhood! well-beloved of heaven;
Whose mind to Christ alone is given,
How longs my heart to feel like thee!
Oh Jesus, form thyself in me.

'Lord! let me, while on earth remaining,
Such child-like frame be still retaining;
With me then here, I know full well,
God and his Paradise will dwell.'

At supper, Sir Francis said, 'A very pleasing tune was that of the bells, this evening: I should like it much for the chimes at our Mentz Rathhaus: it was so remarkably, but chastely joyous; was it not? The peal was so sacredly cheerful, and so subdued also: it seemed as though the church were exulting for the parish; or more exactly, was like the musical expression of a parson's Sunday-evening thoughts, at the end of a holy and hard day's work, well done. I have myself been very happy all day, so that, perhaps, the joy was less in the bells than in my own nerves.'

'Very likely, Francis,' answered Master Brandon. 'For the temper of our minds modifies much the impression made on them by outward objects. Always on a Sabbath evening, the simplest food has a very peculiar relish for me; for commonly at this time, I feel as I used to do, five and twenty years ago, when a seat at the supper-table was a Sunday privilege. It was allowed us partly as an indulgence, and partly for the sake of the psalms, which all participants in the meal joined together to sing first; but excepting myself and sister, they are all of them with God now.'

'Your religion can no longer be aided by their presence; but Willoughby, now that they are dead, their remembrance is itself religiousness.'

'Yes, their memories survive, holy and solemn.'

'And cheerful,' added Sir Francis. 'I agree, and so do you with what Master Asheton advanced this morning. Thoughts concerning the departed should be congenial to us, not in the grave-yard only, but at the table also. The ancient Egyptians used to have the images of their dead relations brought into their chambers, on certain festival days, thereby heightening their joy with holiness. We Christians have more grace than those idolaters, Willoughby; and what they could endure, we ought to rejoice in.'

'I do, Francis. I am recovering now, from my weariness, and consequent melancholy. But as I was going to say, through recollections of the dead

combining with early associations and Sabbath thoughts, always, the Sunday evening meal has for me a feeling like that of a paschal supper; the holiness of the season seems to consecrate the food; and often I eat it, like the Jews, remembering my forefathers the while, and thinking also of their journey, a longer one than that of the Jewish fathers, however, — farther than Egypt, and beyond the ends of the earth.'

'The Jews in their paschal-supper make their third a cup of benediction: this is our second; let us Gentiles drink in it the old Danish toast.'

'Now, then, what is it?'

'It is one, which in some parts that I have voyaged to, is believed, at a feast, to drive away devils from the back of one's chair. Trust me, Willoughby, it is a pleasanter exorcism than fumigation is; with which I was nearly stifled, six months since, at Minchen.'

'Well, but this Scandinavian—'

'It is not the theology of the sentiment I like, only the poetry.'

'What, how?'

'Just as at Mayence, though I cannot worship St Agatha's sanctity, yet I am free to admire her person. There is a lovely picture of her in the church of St Mary: such grace, auburn tresses, blue eyes full of beauty and deep meaning, and lips as though——'

'That will do, Sir Francis. Now will you give this toast?'

'It is very old, very appropriate to this saint's day, and will be remembered by many thousands of true Catholics in countries north of this.'

'Then let us two think of them the while.'

Whereupon Sir Francis said, 'In the name of the blessed archangel St Michael, let us drink of this cup, begging and praying, that he will think worthy to introduce our souls into eternal happiness.'

'Amen,' replied Master Brandon, and then rose to retire to rest; and as he went to his chamber, he repeated to himself these words of St Augustine's, 'Lord! let my soul flee under the cover of thy wings; that being refreshed by the pleasantness of thy shadow, she may sing right gratefully! Now, therefore, in peace will I lay me down and rest.'

CHAPTER IX.

Oh! be the whisper of thy voice within
Enough to strengthen! Be the hope to win
A more deep-seeing homage for thy name,
Far, far beyond the burning dream of fame!
Make me thine only! Let me add but one
To those refulgent steps all undefiled,
Which glorious minds have piled,
Through bright self-offering, earnest, child-like, lone,
For mounting to thy throne!
FELICIA HEMANS.

ON Monday, the morrow of St Michael, Mistress Bouchier, her sister Emma, Master Brandon, and Sir Francis Farel, conversed together on religious subjects in Mistress Bouchier's library.

In answer to a question from Sir Francis, Mistress Jane, replied, 'The Christian Ministers of the first four centuries, and especially the fathers, were nearly all of them Platonists in philosophy, like all the educated people of those times, both heathen and believers, from Egypt to Rome, and Rome to Britain: and they found Athenian Plato's trinity in the Bible, just as now the Papists fondly fancy there traces of purgatorial belief, image-worship, Papal authority, and works of supererogation.

'St Augustine once held the doctrine, that God was One Person, a faith, at that time, the general

belief; and, in his mind, it was by Platonic philosophy that this doctrine of the Scriptures was modified. Augustine says this in a thanksgiving to God, 'Thou didst put into my hands, by means of a certain pompous philosopher, some of Plato's books, translated out of Greek into Latin; and therein I read, not indeed in so many words, but by many and various arguments I was convinced;' and then the saint proceeds with Plato's notion of the divine nature — a modified Trinity: for even St Augustine was not orthodox.'

'It is a common error, that of St Austin's,' said Master Francis, 'to read the Bible with a heathen lamp, instead of exalting the Scriptures to be themselves the world's light.'

'St Augustine lived in the latter part of the fourth century; his testimony is therefore particularly curious, as showing that even after Athanasius was dead, the Trinitarians relied on Plato for their doctrine, more than on the Bible. Other earlier writers make many similar confessions.'

'Sister,' Mistress Emma asked, 'Did not St Athanasius die before the completion of the Trinity?'

'Assuredly. Athanasius was no Trinitarian; he was scarcely even a dualist; for he held that the Father was God in a higher manner than the Son. Athanasius himself may be accounted an Arian, for, notwithstanding his outrageous persecution of Arius, there was less difference between him and his opponent, than there was a hundred years after-

wards between him and his followers. The creed called by his name is a forgery. Highly orthodox as he was for the fourth century; yet if he were bishop of Alexandria now, his opinions on the Trinity would bar his translation to the see of Canterbury. But the multitude were less Trinitarian than himself, for he complains bitterly, that on the subject of the godhead, the mass of believers were infected with blasphemies.'

'Oh!' exclaimed Sir Francis, 'As it was in the beginning, and is now; how prone priests are to calumny! But the laity are learning now, that what is ecclesiastically blasphemous, is often religiously true. All accusations must be accepted — with an allowance for the breath which is in them; and a parson's is seldom the softest. A furious charge of blasphemy against the Church made by Athanasius, may be interpreted to his own prejudice as an innovator.'

'From these and other remarks of his,' said Mistress Jane, 'it is manifest that the vast majority of Christians about the year 360, differed very widely in opinion from St Athanasius, although even he would not now be reckoned sufficiently orthodox. About the year 250, Origen doth write, 'that although there were some, who participated in his opinion, as to the λογος being God and Christ; yet, that the majority knew nothing but Christ, and him crucified. Such is the multitude of those who are reputed believers.' Tertullian, about the year

200, doth write, that then 'the majority of believers shuddered at the Trinity.' And Justin Martyr, at an earlier period, hath this passage in his dialogue with Trypho a Jew. The Jew, of course, was acquainted with the general belief of Christians concerning the person of Christ; but still Justin makes him say, 'that it is a thing beyond all belief, and quite foolish, that this same Christ was a God before the world was made, and afterwards submitted to be born and to be made man: that it is a most unheard of thing, and quite impossible to be proved.' Justin answers, 'that he is not surprised that the Jew doth think it incredible; but that it would not follow that Jesus was not the Christ of God, even if I should not be able to demonstrate that he did pre-exist as the Son of the Creator of the Universe, and as God, and afterwards was born of a virgin:' if he should fail of proving this, Justin says, 'it is but just to say, that I am mistaken in this thing, and not to deny that Jesus is the Christ.' He then confesses that the greater part of his fellow-Christians were of a different opinion from himself.'

'And thus,' Sir Francis said, 'have you conducted us up to the time when the Trinity existed only in a modest germ of speculation in Justin Martyr's mind.'

'At least,' said Mistress Jane, 'it evinces that in the judgment of Justin and his contemporaries, the question of the pre-existence affected not the

Messiahship of Christ. Plainly speculations on Christ's antemundane life were minor and unessential points of belief in the primitive Church.'

Then Master Brandon said, 'Cousin, I thank you. They are the chief ecclesiastical writers, are they not, those which we have been now examining?'

'Yes, in the history of the Christian church, they are the highest authorities. The Papists aver, and truly, that there are no traces of the Trinity in the whole Bible, for they hold that it is a doctrine of tradition. Athanasius and other fathers assert that the apostles concealed the doctrine of the Trinity for prudential reasons, and that St John in his old age was the only apostle who preached it. The councils of bishops, which were held from time to time to debate upon the Trinity, and to settle the limits of the doctrine, were evident proofs of its recency. There were other episcopal councils held on matters, the uncertainty and debating of which are palpable proofs of a general change of doctrine in the Christian church. Councils were held to determine, whether if Christ were two natures in one person, he had more than one will; whether or not the Godhead descended into hell with the human soul; whether Mary was entitled to be called the Mother of God; whether, besides the second person of the Trinity, Christ must not have had a body also, a soul, and a spirit; and whether or not one of the Trinity was crucified. Then there were endless controversies, as wide or wider in

extent than the Roman empire, crowded councils of bishops from every country in Christendom, furious persecutions, in which hundreds and thousands of persons perished, interminable intrigues among the clergy, disgraceful alliances with prefects and emperors, and all as to what should be the understood meaning of such words as person, substance, essence, hypostasis, generation, nature, proceeding, homoousion, and homoiousion. The trinitarian innovators not only killed the persons, and calumniated the memories, of the defenders of primitive truth, but they made it criminal to possess their writings; hence, multitudinous as they were, and pious, also, and learned and ingenious, as confessedly they were, yet not a copy of one Arian production has been preserved. Then a historian of the time writes, that at one of the most important councils held to enact Trinitarian doctrine, out of many hundred bishops present thereat, not more than about twenty were acquainted with the Hebrew language, and consequently were not judges of the idiom even of the New Testament. During the rise of Trinitarianism in the church, excommunications were commoner than honesty. Among Quintianus' anathemas, I recollect this one, 'If any say God-man, and not God and man, let him be damned.'

'A self-damnatory condemnation,' Sir Francis said, 'Oh, how I do wish that Herr Campanus had survived!'

'It was in Wittemberg, was it not, that John Campanus so boldly discarded the Trinity?'

'Yes, in the same town, and the same year nearly, in which Martin Luther abolished Popery. Had he lived, he would have carried on the Reformation more thoroughly than Dr Luther. The banishment in which he died was Luther's procuring. But after the death of Campanus, Luther said himself, 'The word Trinity sounds oddly, and is a human invention; it were better to call Almighty God God than Trinity.' Had Herr Campanus lived, perhaps Dr Luther would have permitted his return to Wittemberg, but Dr Luther was always sedulous to stifle controversy in the Reformed Church, being anxious to prevent Protestantism from appearing a dangerous license. Philip Melanchthon is also understood to deprecate very strongly the discussion of the Trinity.'

Mistress Jane answered, 'Such a scholar's fears on such a subject are strong presumptions against its truth. I have been advised from Geneva, that Dr John Calvin hath said that he likes not the prayer, 'Oh, holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity!' as savouring of barbarity; also that he doth acknowledge that 'the word Trinity is barbarous, insipid, profane, a human invention, grounded on no testimony of God's word — the Popish God, unknown to the prophets and apostles.''

'And,' said Sir Francis, 'Dr Erasmus, no long while before his death, wrote to my old friend Pirk-

heimer that he could himself be of the Arian persuasion, if the Church approved it.'

'I have most of Erasmus's works here,' Mistress Jane replied, and she reached a volume from the shelf, and said, 'In the note on Ephesians, cap. v. ver. 5, Erasmus saith, that the word of God, used absolutely, doth denote the Father always; and concerning Philippians, cap. ii. ver. 6, he observes, that it proves nothing against the Arians, although relied upon by the fathers as the chief opposing text. And in commenting on St Jerome, Dr Erasmus doth emphatically deny that the Arians were heretics.'

Sir Francis answered, 'For more than a thousand years the church has had no believer so competent as Erasmus to pronounce on church doctrine and history; if indeed there ever has been such another as he, since the days of the apostles. Theology is a matter in which, to my mind, Dr Erasmus's opinion doth infinitely outweigh Papal infallibility, and all other church authority. But, indeed, the history of the Trinity is the confutation of the doctrine. Last week, I conversed concerning the Trinity with a city merchant, and it was marvellous how he was horrified by my avowal, that God was One Person and undivided, the Father. There was something divine in the word Trinity, he said, before which he involuntarily trembled. He was strangely troubled, on my reminding him that the word was unscriptural, and as much a human invention, as the word

purgatory or penance. I reminded him, also, that he had not only trembled at the doctrine, but formerly at the image of the Trinity, in the church of St Olave's; in the same manner as before the statutes of the saints, which yet had been abolished, together with the saints themselves. He relied, he said, on the three first general councils for his faith. I would that I had known their history; nevertheless, I did ask him, whether himself he knew the worth of those councils, or whether he was relying on Dr Cranmer's opinion concerning them, which latter, I said, was identical with selecting Dr Cranmer for his private pope.'

Mistress Jane replied, 'The detection of doctrinal error is mainly useful, as emancipating the mind from thraldom. Did the Apostles' Creed contain the same damnatory clause, as the Athanasian; the one might be truer than the other, but it would not be exempt from a hurtful influence. Truth is itself prejudice, when held in a slavish spirit. It would be no spiritual gain to transfer implicit belief from St Athanasius to Arius, his opponent. When a golden idol has been broken in our sight, by the help of great courage and strength, the inference should be the abolition of idolatry, and not that some rival statute is preferable, made of silver, or perhaps only of painted wood.'

'It is strange inconsistency,' said Master Brandon, 'in the King's Council, and in the Bishops, to repudiate Papal authority in doctrines, and yet

themselves to assume it. The Roman Church maintains that God doth inspire with infallibility all General Councils and Papal bulls; so that the Papists are consistent in extorting obedience. But our churchmen deny the existence of such authority, and yet themselves presume upon it.'

'Nay,' Mistress Jane answered, 'It is not that our Reformers mistake themselves as sharing in what they deny, but as Lords and Commissioners, they have power, and as men strong feelings; and the temptation is great to gratify the one by the use of the other.'

'Especially should the Evil One,' Sir Francis said, 'whisper them the while how pious their motives are.'

Here Mistress Emma leaped to the window, and exclaimed, 'Sister! sister! here is Maud Fowler. I asked her, last Thursday, why her father was suspected as a Papist, and she answered, that it was because in several companies, he had criminated the new learning, as unsettling men's minds. Question her, sister. Maud hath been more serious of late. We are a theological company: let us instruct her.'

Mistress Maud bounded merrily into the room, and with a sweet laugh, closed the book, from which Mistress Jane had last read; and then clapped her hands, and said, 'Come, friends have their rights, as well as fathers. Mine is asleep, in an arm-chair: fold yours together in their boards,

and place them in their niches: and then for a walk; will you?'

Here Maud Fowler first perceived that her friends were not alone, in the library: thereupon she sat down hastily beside Mistress Emma, blushed deeply, and hung down her head. After a short conversation, Maud Fowler recovered herself, and then Mistress Emma inquired, 'Maud, your father doth dislike the new learning: and is it thence your own little interest in it?'

'Partly; but I have no relish for controversy. I confess, that any time, I would rather hear a sweet song to the Virgin, than listen to a bitter quarrel, as to whether the Virgin Mother heard it.'

'Maud, Maud!' said Mistress Jane solemnly, 'our religious preferences should be of some stronger character than that.'

Mistress Maud answered in a subdued tone, 'Indeed I have begun to feel myself wrong; but into religion I am afraid to inquire: for I foresee such a host of difficulties would start up, and distract me with their teasing. But now, this new learning, does it not make religion an uncertainty?'

'No!' answered Mistress Jane, 'Do alterations in the management of children tend to the destruction of filial love? There were force in your objection, if we Protestants were substituting another God; and if instead of bowing to the east, we turned towards some new deity in the west.'

'But at least,' Mistress Maud answered, 'the new

religion hath a tendency to make men distrust the Divine Existence.'

'Supposing it were so; that belief would be hardly worth regarding, which depends for its preservation on certain old ceremonies and on antique phraseology. That man is already without God and Christ in the world, whose feeling of the Divine presence in Church is dependent on the priest's having a cross worked into his surplice. If the Reformation shake any man's faith, it is well for him that it should be shaken; since it is only a treacherous seeming of belief.'

'Oh! your Protestant religion is too difficult; it is much pleasanter to believe as one's forefathers have thought; and it is easier.'

'Is it easier, Maud? I do think, now, that you would find it a hard matter to stake your salvation on your belief in transubstantiation. Acquiescence differs widely from faith. If you mean to say, that you are undecided as to the propriety of worshipping the saints, and yet that you persist in adoring the Virgin, I beseech you to consider, whether your carelessness of Protestant controversy, be not really religious indifference; and whether you may not be mistaking mere taste for Christian faith. Fancy may be delighted with songs to the Virgin; and so it may, with repeating Homer's hymn to Apollo. Most scholars would prefer Homeric verse to controversial bitterness, but not as being themselves polytheists. If you worship the Virgin, St

Peter, and St Thomas of Canterbury in a faith no stronger than a poet's invocation of the muses; you are in want of a religion, Maud.'

'You are plain-spoken, Mistress Jane. But I think — I acknowledge, that partly, you may, in a manner, be to some extent, right. But I do not see the rectitude of abolishing the old religious forms.'

'Many Catholic ceremonies have an objectionable meaning: but others are very lovely, and are Christian customs, which might and ought to be retained. It is not curing the commonality of Popery to abolish their old religious customs; for the superstition is in their hearts, and not in the mere ceremonies. Forms are a kind of language, and may as reasonably be employed by Protestants, as by Catholics; our Churchmen are too fanatical in their abolition: indeed they act in this respect as indiscreetly, as though it were attempted to make wise an ignorant man, by simply prohibiting his use of the vulgar tongue, as having been the medium of his foolishness. But, Maud, you may not abide in the Catholic Church merely for the sake of its pleasant and venerable rites: for that would be like crediting a doctor, not for his learning, but on account of his smooth manners: and it would be as senseless as an Italian philosopher's consorting with ignorant peasants for the sake of their Tuscan dialect.'

'Well, but now you favourers of the new learning

are not agreed among yourselves. Nay, Dr Cranmer himself is uncertain as to the truth; for he burned your friend, Mistress Anne Askew, for believing an opinion, disbelief in which is made punishable now. For years, also, he has vacillated on other essential points. It is whispered, too, that with his wife's friends he doth profess agreement with the German Reformers. Then it is universally known, that the Swiss, German, and English doctors of the new learning are disagreed on many matters. You yourself, Jane, I do suspect of differing from them all. Were you Protestants tolerant enough to allow Catholics their worship, joyfully would the people resume their old faith, notwithstanding these twenty years of reformation.'

'Maud, it may happen that the Reformers differ only on unessential points.'

'Well, but the favourers of the new learning have fined and imprisoned one another for differences, which they agreed among themselves did concern essential matters.'

'I acknowledge it. Favourers of the new learning favour new Popery also. Bigotry and power will generate a Pope, at Lambeth Palace, as readily as in the halls of the Vatican: and under favourable circumstances a bench of bishops is as easily persuaded of its infallibility, as is the College of Cardinals. Maud, attribute the persecutions among the Reformed, to the right sources, to the weakness of human nature, and not to the principles of the new religion.'

'Verily,' said Master Brandon, 'Dr Cranmer and his associates will allow no other Protestants but themselves in all England: for they protest against the Pope's prescribing to them; but themselves most stringently prescribe to the people; and will not only endure no protest, but no suspicion even of a Christian's dissenting from their doings.'

'Well now,' Mistress Maud said, 'why am I to rely on regal more than on papal authority? There is a new prayer-book commanded to be used; but the larger portion of the bishops prefer the mass-book, as do all the unmarried, that is, all the impartial clergy, and who are far the most numerous. Then, see how the religious changes are effected: how the bishops favourable to the old learning are imprisoned out of the way, in order that Dr Cranmer's prayer-book may be forced upon their clergy. And such a prayer-book! The King's councillors selected only men of their own minds to compile it: it is the same as though written by laymen: and it is unfit for Christian use; for most of the bishops disapprove of it, and I shall think the same even when they sanction it, all of them, as they will one day; for now that the Government appoint to bishoprics, they will soon have all the prelates creatures of their own. Jane, it doth anger me to speak of these matters: how the Catholic Church hath been abolished for the sake of this Act-of-Parliament Church; how the old religion hath been overthrown to make way for the Privy Council's

liturgy, by imprisonment of men's bodies, and fines at the King's will and pleasure: and how Cranmer and a few innovators, most of them through vilest motives, are extirpating the old faith, contrary to the convictions of the people, the clergy, and nearly all the bishops. All the late religious changes are directly attributable to the King's officers. Nay, the very germ of all this movement, was it not external to the Church? It was not formed in a pure spirit like John Wickliffe; nor in any convocation of the clergy, nor in any council of the bishops. We all know how it had its unclean origin, in the late King's lustful mind. If the King's Council will make a religion for themselves, they cannot justly force it upon others, who have like liberty with themselves: and if they may, why may not all others judge for themselves?'

'Indeed, Maud, I cannot say, why not. I say they must. A person who is earnest in religion must fully convince himself of its doctrines.'

'But, it may be that — I know not what. Is it not one's duty to believe religion?'

'Manifestly not without being satisfied of its truth. The worth of a person's religion is dependent on the fullness of his persuasion. It is our nature, to believe in religion; the duty is in believing what is truest. The Pope may command our agreement with the mass, and threaten our refusal with excommunication by bell, book, and candle; the King may publish a new prayer-book to be used

under penalty of arrest; and Athanasius may say, that his theory of the Trinity must be accepted, or the disbeliever, without doubt, perish everlastingly: but truth's claims are prior to theirs.'

'But I may err.'

'And so did some of the Apostles: for St Paul and St Peter differed, and that on no unimportant point; but if Paul were right, Peter was not the less a Christian; since his error was sanctified by sincerity. The spirit, in which a doctrine is held, constitutes much of its worth; in one person's mind it is a living truth whilst in another's it exists as a mere fable, or a prejudice.'

'Yesterday,' said Mistress Maud, 'I was an hour in the church, reading Erasmus' New Testament, which hath only lately been put up, notwithstanding the strictness of the King's commandment. I begged the clerk, that I might carry it home; but he was unable to wrench the iron holdfast out of the desk. I was tired of standing, and when I had read to Pilate's words what is truth, I sat down much more thoughtfully, I am sure, than Master Scruton commonly does at the reading-desk. After thinking on the many, and contrary doctrines, which the Government have commanded, at sundry times, and on the mutual denunciations of the new doctors; the fixed doctrine of the old church deemed the more venerable for the contrast and most worthy of respect.'

'It is all delusion, Maud. Your dream about uni-

formity of belief in the Catholic Church is not cruel, but it is as fond as the attempt to enforce it among Protestants. Take twenty Catholics of different grades in society and education, and examine into their theology, and it will be a miracle if you do not obtain twenty different systems. A philosopher and a boor will not and cannot understand any doctrine, the same way, and still less agree in their reasoning upon it. And when there are twenty doctrines in question, each one of which has been understood twenty different ways, agreement in faith is impossible. Stand by the Church of Nôtre Dame in Paris: the hundreds who enter in all cross themselves with holy water; so far they are uniformly Catholics; but with that ceremony the uniformity ends: for mass and the sermon make as many different impressions, that is, as many different beliefs as there are hearers. Uniformity of the Catholic Church! The eight letters of the word Catholic — are uniform, but no eight believers. The uniformity is verbal; it is not in spirit. Look into the institutions, the doctrine, and the practice of Catholic believers; and Protestants neither are, nor ever will be more diverse.'

'The five bodies of friars have distinguishing characteristics, indicative of as many different religious conceptions in their members. Different countries suppose themselves patronized by their separate saints. The people of Walsingham despised all other images of the Virgin in comparison

with their own: and Italian voyagers are accustomed to account all other statutes of the Queen of Heaven, as utterly impotent compared with their Lady of Loretto. Ever since the Catholic Church existed, there has, every century, occurred within it, a great controversy on some doctrine or other. On most of these disputes the Popes passed judgment, and defined the Catholic doctrine more minutely than it had previously been; but every such decision manifested, that, up to its date, there had existed within the bosom of the Infallible Church, such a space of uncertainty, as had allowed, even true Catholics, to vacillate between sound doctrine and damnable error. Then the various complexions of the church, in successive Catholic ages, virtually indicate as various beliefs. The articles of faith may always have been the same, but their meaning varied from age to age: for sometimes one doctrine stood prominently out, and at other times another; so that the popular belief practically varied with the predominant dogma of the time. There are no two generations of the Catholic Church, but would have convulsed her with their furious quarrels, could they have been contemporary; for instance, St Bernard was the type of orthodoxy in the twelfth century, and William Occam in another age; but pope Leo X. and Martin Luther, the monk, never differed more scornfully, than the invincible Doctor and the ascetic abbot would have done. Take another instance. Pope

Zosimus favoured and defended the doctrine of Pelagius, the British monk, who preached that by the help of the Gospel, righteousness is possible with all men: and who also maintained, that only men of righteous lives are saved. This was in the year of grace 413: but Papal doctrine was totally transformed in a few centuries; and men were to be saved by having imputed to them the super-righteousness of the saints; shares in their merits being reckoned saleable, and the Pope sole dispenser of this 'treasure of the Church.' There was not as great difference between John Wickliffe and the Roman Church, as this which exists between Pope Zosimus in the fifth century, and Pope Clement in the fourteenth, who, in a bull of the year 1350, published his power to sell and 'to endow men with merit out of this treasure, the blood of Christ, the virtue of which is infinite, the merit of the Virgin-mother of God, and of all the saints.' Pope Zosimus patronized Pelagius, the British preacher of personal righteousness; but Leo X. mounted the Dominican Tetzel on a carriage-load of indulgences, and bade him drive through all the German towns on his infamous mission.'

Mistress Bouchier opened a book, and took from between its leaves the notorious tax of indulgence, by which the Pope of Rome granted absolution for murder, theft, perjury, and other crimes; adultery being therein rated at four groschen. Mistress Jane said, 'This scale of indulgences was given

me by a traveller, who received it from Tetzel's hands at Frankfort on the Oder, while the Dominican was papal agent there. Allow an apostle to have been the first bishop of Rome; and is there then uniformity of doctrine between St Peter's epistles and this infamous document of St Peter's successor.

'Also, papal dogmas may, historically be shown, to have grown up and superseded the earlier and once universal doctrines of the Church. The English New Testament I will lend to you; and do you read it through, and see whether there can be harmonized with it, the prayer to the Virgin Mary, 'Command thy Son by thy right as his mother;' or that doctrine which St Bonaventura expresseth thus, 'All things that are God's, are the Virgin Mary's, because she is both the Spouse and the Mother of God.'

'Jane, is there really, now, no scriptural authority for the worship of the Virgin?'

'Just as little——' but Sir Francis checked himself, for he was about to aver that there was as little as for the doctrine of the Trinity; which, indeed, is the truth, but Sir Francis was unwilling to divert the course of the argument.

'None, whatever, Maud,' Mistress Jane answered. 'In the Scriptures, there is no mention of prayer to her; nor is she ever called Mother of God, or Queen of Heaven. For many generations there was no worship offered to her; and it was not till

the year 480, that she was worshipped in the Church by name. Her festival of Candlemass was not instituted till the year 536. The rosary of prayers and the crown began to be used in her honour, only in the tenth century. About the twelfth century, her worship spread rapidly; prior to which age, it was not one-twentieth part of what it has latterly become. So far from the Catholic Church being immutable, it may be demonstrated to have undergone change in every doctrine, every age.'

Mistress Maud answered, 'Protestants aver that there is no Christian authority for the Pope's supremacy: Catholics affirm that there is: but I am aware, that wishing adds wonderful weight to evidence, for I am myself chiefly influenced by its seeming necessary to have an infallible pope, for the security of uniform doctrine: but you deny that there ever has been, and, if I understand you rightly, that there ever can be a uniform belief in the Catholic Church. I have never heard that possibility questioned before. But, now does not Papal infallibility seem desirable to sanction such changes as you have described, and to adapt the church to men's wants. When there is division upon a doctrine, does it not seem probable that Christ should have left some vicegerent on earth, obedience to whose decision should have the virtue of sound doctrine.'

'Sincerity in believing, and humility in professing, are a consecration of any doctrine. And as to

the probability you speak of, I think it is much otherwise. One is our Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren; and to that Master do we all stand or fall, whether we be Popes, or Kings, or archbishops, or women, condemned by St Paul to keep perpetual silence in the church.'

'But Jane, the religious world is full of contradictory doctrines; how can I hope to select the true: but obedience to the Pope justifies one in belief.'

'So does prayer to God; so does love of Christ; so does earnestness of mind. I tell you Maud, God gave you reason that you might use it, and use it you must; for life is a divine schooling to compel you. Perhaps, now, it is the worst of heresies to surrender mind and conscience implicitly to the Pope; holy men have thought so, and Protestant England maintains it. Also, you have to consider that the Greek Patriarch's claims are as old and high as those of the Roman Pope; and he damns unbelievers with as orthodox an emphasis, and for as long a duration as his Roman rival does. Now, Maud, by the time you have settled the comparative worth of the claims of the Roman See and the Greek Patriarchate, you will have exercised your reason, quite as much as in reading the Scriptures and forming your own faith. Also, you will have discovered this, that Papists use their private judgment in the very act of renouncing it; for, in entering the Catholic Church, they have first decided a most

serious question, that of pope or no pope; and you, if you persist in your inclination, will have to determine an additional question, and one quite as difficult, that of Pope or Patriarch.'

'Well, I shall think upon what you have now advanced. But it is the violence of the times that does so revolt me; and the meanness of public men, together with the growing irreligiousness of the commonalty, are most portentous of evil for the country.'

'Myself, I never visit the town,' said Master Brandon, 'without being reminded of a passage in Plato; for these evil times of England seem to resemble so much those of Greece.'

'Will you read to us what strikes you so much? There — I thought, that it was in the Dialogue on the Republic.'

'It is,' said Master Brandon; 'and it seems to me so exact, so mournful a portraiture of a good man fallen upon evil times; it is expressive of feeling most resolutely holy, and at the same time so despairing of the world at large. Listen now; it is Socrates who is the speaker. After mentioning that there are very few spirits formed by nature for the study of philosophy, and devoted to it by choice, he says that, 'Of these few, even he who tastes and feels how blessed a possession it is, and who has seen the madness of the many — how not one sound act of one single individual can be found in public life; how not a single man exists with whom

to ally himself, in support of right and to save his soul; how like a man fallen into a den of wild beasts, when he is neither willing to be an accomplice in their crimes, nor able by his single arm to resist the fury of them all — perish he must, and that before he can benefit his country or his friends, and all his plans of usefulness perish with him, — when these thoughts and these sights occur to him, all that he can do is to retire into privacy and never move beyond himself; and like a traveller in a storm, while dust and foam are swept past him by the whirlwind, to take shelter under a low wall, and when he sees all around him gorged and choked with sin, to bless his fate, if he himself may live in this life clear from iniquity and ungodliness, and may depart from it when his hour arrives, at peace with himself and with his God.''

'The sentiment is very beautiful, even for Plato,' said Mistress Jane; 'but with us Christians, hope is a virtue, and there are circumstances in life, in which, as a Christian grace, it is little, if at all, inferior to faith itself.'

'It was during a discussion on hope,' Mistress Maud said, 'that my father contracted his repugnance to the new learning, I do believe; for on that occasion he suffered a scornful retort from Dr Erasmus, who was, at that time, visiting the Master of St John's College at Oxford. Also my father was offended at some of the sentiments which Dr Erasmus uttered; for he said that profane learning was

better preparation for heaven than a pilgrimage to St James of Compostello, or than dying in the habit of St Francis; also he said, as my father reports, that if neither the Æneid, the Odyssey, or the Iliad, should be found in heaven, that there would be other matters seen there, at which my father would be greatly more astonished — which saying my father regards as impious, if not heretical.'

'Heretical,' said Mistress Jane, 'it is not; for the church hath no article upon the subject. Concerning the business and the bliss of heaven, St Paul says, that it hath never entered the heart of man to conceive them. Doubtless, the expectations of Erasmus were as reasonable as those of his opponents, formed probably out of church pictures of angels, sitting upon clouds, trumpet in hand, or adopted, perhaps, on the faith of some friar's assertion, that celestial happiness is an everlasting celebration of high mass by popes and electoral archbishops, with hosts of angels for a full choir, and with acolytes, the very meanest of them cardinals and lord abbots. Such monks and friars as are fit for nothing else may hope for a heaven of processions, red-letter days, and high mass; but let them who have grace to entertain better wishes form them, and strengthen and satisfy their larger hearts by their loftier aspirations. Both by reason and Scripture, spiritual blessedness must infinitely transcend our carnal apprehensions; for gorgeous

and glowing as are the scriptural descriptions of heaven, yet if the blessed apostles recollect their writings, now that they are themselves in glory, they must deem their earthly anticipations to have been but feeble.'

'Feeble, Jane, and yet apostolic!'

'No doubt, Maud. If the things preparing in heaven exceed apostolic thought, much more must they excel apostolic description. Paul knew a man caught up into Paradise, but what things he heard were 'unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.' Hope is a virtue, as well as faith and charity. To anticipate heaven is both duty and delight, and our expectations cannot be too lively; and as to their character and magnitude their reasonableness may be tested by their tendency to purify the heart, even as Christ is pure. Thrones, crowns, and dominions over cities — these are figurative, not literal, descriptions of our rewards. A sceptre is not such a rapturous prefiguration of glory to us English people as it was to the Roman slave and the outcast Jew; nor is the description of a celestial river of water so refreshing in these northern climates as when heard among Arabian sands, or under a Syrian sky; still the expectations of even apostolic converts will be transcended. But we must not forget that the joys of heaven are spiritual. The fleshly-minded think more of the chrysolites, the amethysts, the sapphires, with which the city of God is resplendent, than

even of the Son of God, who is himself the chief glory of that house not made with hands; just as their Jewish predecessors esteemed Christ's miracles more than his Messiahship, and the twelve baskets full of meat more than that spirit which was given to Jesus without measure. So they be of a purifying tendency, and spiritual in character, our hopes, then, cannot be too vast to be Christian. Eternity is the Divine treasure-house, and hope is the window, by means of which mortals are permitted to see as through a glass darkly the things which God is preparing.'

'Hope is one of the chief graces of a church; yet, amid angry words and scholastic definitions of faith and charity, hope has been well nigh untwisted from the threefold cord of apostolic teaching. The church in despondency is the church loosening her anchors in rough seas, anxious to see what sort of earth adheres to them; because her faith is failing her as to the ground where she has moored herself. Beware of losing hope. Hope alone is the light by which we sad-featured dwellers among Christian tombs can find our way — the twilight, for it is but a twilight, of Christian expectation. Nay, there are smiles on men's faces, and gladness in their eyes, and mirth too in their voices, despite of their sadness and their strict lives, and all because of hope. Hope, to the Church is 'the wine of their beloved, that goeth

down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.' Hope reconciles them to life; hope makes death pleasant to them; hope tastes and smells of heaven; hope clasps the cross; hope yearns onward for the crown; hope justifies; hope sanctifies; hope feeds faith; hope matures charity; hope breeds good works; hope consecrates hearts, and purifies the fleshly temples of the spirit; hope interprets the sacraments; hope saves souls; — and for that they let not go of hope, churches reform themselves.' This is what Frederick William Faber writes, that a man of the middle ages said to him in a vision at Milan, in the cloisters of the Cathedral of San Ambrogio. It is a beautiful paragraph, only, the sentiment that men are happy in spite of the strictness of their lives, is too ascetical to be purely Christian; for Christianity will have us think that a wise self-discipline is itself blissful; and as to asceticism, in the bad sense of the word, or the use of a hair-shirt for torment's sake, and of fasting merely for the sensation of pain, it is not only miserable in the flesh, but it has not the very highest hopes in the spirit, even according to Catholic belief, for these following are the words of Cardinal Bellarmine, in the sixth degree of his Gradual, whereby to ascend unto God.

'Now, these are the three works to which, from the unanimous opinion of holy and learned men, gifts are given in heaven; that is, certain particular rewards, besides eternal life, are bestowed upon

martyrs, doctors and virgins; upon martyrs, on account of their great charity, because, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;' upon doctors, on account of their wonderful knowledge and wisdom, of whom Daniel says, 'They who instruct others unto justice shall shine as stars to all eternity;' and upon virgins, on account of their precious treasure of purity, for which they were heard by St John singing a new canticle, which no one else could sing, 'These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits to God and to the Lamb.' But the charity of the martyrs, the wisdom of the doctors, and the purity of the virgins, are not the only good works, which are proved by the fire of the divine judgment, and which receive a perfect reward. There are other works, which, provided they be done with charity, will be numbered amongst the gold and silver, and shall receive their reward.'

At home, in the evening, Master Brandon said, 'I will read these few extracts, which my cousin has herself translated. They are chiefly, I think, from St Augustine.'

'Thank you, Willoughby. I shall like to hear her Thoughts from the Fathers.'

Master Brandon then read as follows: —

'Before all things, God existed alone; a world to himself, and space, and all things.

'He was then, where he is now, in himself, for he is all-sufficient to himself.

'Though nature is full of the Godhead, yet no angel whatever, nor any of the saints, can perfectly comprehend, or see it.

'What is God? Length, Breadth, Height, Depth; Length, on account of his Eternity; Breadth on account of his Love; Height on account of his Majesty; and Depth on account of his Wisdom.

'In the eternity of God, there is nothing so past, as to have quite ceased to be present; and nothing so completely future, as though it did not already exist.

'He who searches after the Cause of the Divine Will, is seeking for something greater than God.

'With God, in vain do men endeavour after the Cause of His Will; since, of all created things, His Will is the Cause. Therefore let human restlessness restrain itself, and not seek that which does not exist, for fear of missing that which does.

'Shall the manifest be denied, because the secret cannot be comprehended? On this account shall we say, that what is so is not so, because how it is so, we cannot find out?

'The greater portion of our knowledge is the less part of our ignorance.

'Nothing improper is to be asked concerning God; and nothing to be answered but what has been learned from God.

'What then is impossible with God? The thing

which is opposed by His nature, not what is tremendous by its own.

'The first great name of God is Good.

'Although that nature, unchangeable and unspeakable, is not rightly described, as having been, or about to be, but only as being; yet on account of the mutability of the season in which our mortality is spent, we may say, and that not falsely, He is, He was, and He will be; for in past ages He was, in the present He is, and in the future He will be: He was, because He never was not; He will be, because He will never not be; and He is, because he always is.

'Thou God has created us for thyself; therefore, our spirit is not at rest, until it rest in thee.

'For the carnal man some requirements are purposely impossible, that prayer may be applied to, and matter for prayer be felt.

'Prayer that is pure pierceth heaven, and returns not empty.

'To pray well, is to study well.

'Let him learn to fear, who does not wish to fear.

'Everlasting fear, and trembling, and distrust, are consequences of vice; but the sense of sin is the first great punishment of sin.

'Made in the likeness of God, the rational soul may be much distracted here, but never can it be satisfied quite; for being created capable of God, it can rest content with nothing but God.

'It is not fruitless to pursue infinite things that are unattainable at first, since it is by striving that the soul strengthens.

'He who loves that which may be loved without God, loves God the less.

'Whatever is without God is not sweet; therefore whatever my Lord God is about bestowing upon me, let him withhold the whole, and impart to me Himself.

'Through his promises the Deity deigns to be debtor.

'Three things I consider, in which all my hopes consist, — the readiness of God's grace, — the truth of His promise, — and the power of his performance.

'My merit is God's mercy.

'Unless God waited long for the impious, there could no pious man be saved.

'Whatever good you do is God.

'Man's soul is blessed with the true God alone, and in Him alone, and by Him alone.

'It is the essence of crime to be unwilling to know what you cannot but know.

'To commiserate is sometimes more than to give; for money is external to a man's self, but he who bestows compassion communicates his own soul.

'They who do not know themselves, know not how to spare themselves.

'These are all, Francis; I think they are chiefly from St Augustine's City of God; and they are,

some of them, quite gems and chrysolytes of thought.'

'Two or three are as terse as the Latin; and that is no trifling praise, provided the sense has not been sacrificed, concerning which matter I cannot speak. Willoughby, did it ever occur to you to remark on the historical re-appearance of peculiar characters? Did you ever hear of three men more alike, and at the same time more unlike one another than St Paul, St Augustine, and Martin Luther? Your cousin on Sunday spoke of a similarity between St Paul and St Augustine. Oh! who was the lady that had the theological entertainment?'

'Maud Fowler is a neighbour, and lives at Harford House, only that she and her father do not often reside there long together. What did you think of her?'

'She is a honeysuckle.'

'A honeysuckle! Francis.'

'Yes! her beauty is of the old model, and she is wild like woodbine. Odd! Oh, no, it is not. A garden I regard as an assemblage of female emblems, as a harem of metaphors. There is no woman of any age, condition, or appearance, but has her resemblance among flowers. Some women blossom their best, early in life like the violet, and like it lose their sweetness early; while others reach a later and longer perfection, though not so lovely, like the gilliflower. The manners of some women are affectionate, indeed, but humble and beseeching, like the appearance of a forget-me-not;

while some other women will look the world full in the face and persist in it, turning them impudently and purposely about, like those tall flowers which follow the sun. One woman is full of pleasantness and song, and exhales agreeable feeling, as freely as the wild thyme does its lovely scent; while another has no natural expression whatever, and when necessity elicits from her the utterance of a few words, the listener is reminded of the bee's fortune, on forcing his head into an unpleasant odour, inside the lips of a snapdragon. Some flowers are best in a plot by themselves, and some women flourish in celibacy best, but they are only a very few; for most are like climbing plants, unsupported they are insignificant, but with manly strength to rely upon, then their inherent capacities of usefulness, and comfort, and lovely life unfold themselves. Some females are as full of words as a dog-rose is of blossoms; while others have less talk but more meaning, each single sentiment being worth attention for its tender thoughtfulness: these are like the roses of Provence, which have commonly only two or three blossoms at a time, but those very large and fragrant. Not that I depricate dog-roses, nor talkative women either; for what would our hedges be without the one, and often, what would society be without the other? Daisies are little girls; the daffodil is a peasant woman; and the columbine emblems a maiden lady of fifty-five.'

'As to the columbine, Francis, it is in England typical of any thing else rather than a maiden lady.

no matter what her age. Your floral are very dubious emblems; for there is a shrub which is called lad's-love in Norfolk, while in Worcestershire, it is known as old man. But I interrupt you; or is your floral similitude full blown?'

'No: I have one petal more to open. Some ladies are like pumpions, flaunting all over with blossoms, and exuberant with a kind of vegetable vitality, but which fails the possessor with the first frost of misfortune: while other women, and they are the more numerous, lift up their modest heads like snow drops out of the icy ground, and by the fragrancy of their promises, and the prettiness of their smiles, do they make their despairing husbands know and trust, that if for a season the surface of life be hardened and desolate, yet that there are seeds of happiness underneath, together with energies of nature, numerous enough, and strong enough, to ripen for their joint fruition as man and wife, a fresh summer of plenteousness and beauty, together with accompanying warmth, affection, and delight.'

'The matter makes you eloquent,' said Master Brandon.

'It is my much observation speaks.'

'Francis, here is a messenger coming to summon us to my sister. But I have this to say myself, that after heavenly help, I could wish in the hour of sorrow never to be without the scent of a flower, or beyond the sound of a woman's voice, even though it were only a maid-servant's.'

CHAPTER X.

Can I accomplish this, I shall, through means of my book, bring up, for posterity, a race of men, finding refreshment in all things; in the warmth of their rooms, and of their night caps; in their pillows, in mere apostles' days, in the evening moral tales of their wives. * * * You perceive my drift is, that man may become a little tailor-bird, which, not amidst the crashing boughs of the storm-tost, roaring, immeasurable tree of life, but upon one of its leaves, sews itself a nest together, and there lies snug.

JEAN PAUL RICHTER.

ON Thursday, that is, on the morrow of the feast day of St Thomas, of Hereford, Master Brandon and Sir Francis Farel went to the city. On their way thither they passed through Hollow-way road; at the end of which, and inside the porch of his house, there sat a gentleman, enjoying the fine autumnal morning and his green old age together.

'Good morning!' said Master Brandon, 'good morning, Master Rufford.'

'Ah, Willoughby! Good morning to you! I did not speak to you, on Sunday. How did you like Master Asheton's homily? Eh, eh? Ingenious was it not, and beautifully worded, and no Popish taint in it, eh? John, take these horses! What, you will not? Are you going to town? Better stay with me to-day! There is no pleasure, no.

enjoyment in the city; allow me to tell you both What a fool I was, to live in Grace-Church Street, so many years! But it is all the same now. I am as happy as the day is long. Bless me, what a happy world it is, when we find the secret out!'

'So it is,' said Sir Francis, 'There is not a four-footed beast but can swim; and there is not a child but is happy: but most men, with their larger minds, mar instead of improving their lots. Passion swells out their breasts, ambition lifts up their heads, discontentment makes them spurn with their feet; and then they wonder that their circumstances do not fit them. Oh, the wretches! They deserve to go through life naked and gnashing their teeth.'

'Ay, but let them come into the country,' said Master Rufford. 'There is existence, life, happiness here.'

'The Romans,' said Sir Francis, 'sometimes reckoned as the years of a man's life, only those of his rural retirement.'

'Ay, indeed!'

'I have seen near Tivoli, the tomb of a consul, I think his name was Metellus, who was described in his epitaph, as having lived nine years, meaning thereby, those which he had spent at his country house.'

'Good, good, very good! I did not think those Latin fellows had been so sensible; for, after all they were only dark heathens, I take it. I shall

tell George Purbecque the jeweller. He wants to heap together twenty thousand pounds. I say that the thought of the thing is enough to damn him; let alone the doing: for we know, we know how money is made. I tell him, that I would as soon eat sin for the whole parish, as live as he does. George is an older man than I am; and I advise him that it is high time, to give up his shop and bethink him of his soul. But he cannot imagine what there is to be done in the country: however I warn him — I warn him, that it is a blasphemous state of mind, and perilous, which delights in gold medals, in plated vases, and silver cups, in chains, dishes, and salt-cellars, more than it does in the heavens and the earth, which are God's handiwork.'

'How full the old hawthorn-bush is of berries this autumn!' Master Brandon remarked.

'Ay, it is a pretty tree. In the spring, the green buds were pretty, and then the white blossoms were beautiful; and when they vanished, the thick green leaves were pretty; and now that they are turned yellow with the frost, they and the red berries are pretty. Why, there has not been an hour, but some bird or other has been singing in that bush: the merlin and the throstle-cock sung there in April; and the cuckoo in May, day and night almost; and the sparrow, the pie-finch, and the wry-neck, all the summer; and now in autumn the robin sings there from morning till night. There was a sparrow's nest there, at Easter, and soon

after a billy white-throat's and a tom-tit's and a thrush's. The birds built there in the spring, and in the summer they sung there; they roost in the trunk, some of them now; and in the winter they will feed on its branches. Not know what is to be seen in the country, George Purbecque! Why, it is quite as interesting, and it is more innocent to view the history of that tree from spring till the last leaf falls, than it is to watch a rival tradesman falling into one misfortune after another, one shift after another deceiving him, till at last he loses heart, hope and goods, all together.'

'I am very much of your opinion,' said Sir Francis. 'There is a beautiful butterfly, look, on that gilliflower.'

'Ay, look at it, look at it, and let them of little faith look at it. Some mothers grow grey with thinking what will become of their children, in this hard and wicked world. One might wonder, what could go with the butterfly in tempestuous nights, in whirlwinds and in stormy days; but I have noticed it safe under a broad leaf, secure and dry under such a shelter as that, while rivers have been flooded and tall trees been uprooted.'

'The Greeks,' said Master Brandon, 'carved the butterfly sometimes in marble, as an emblem of hope for the dead.'

'And so it is, and so it is. Let the valley of the shadow of death be as awfully dark as it may, and let all unknown terrors exist there, though I do not

believe that there are any, still what is there to fear for the human soul, as long as God is in heaven and on earth, and therefore in death, which is the midway passage between the two. Listen now, that is the passing bell for Samuel Stretton, one of farmer Turton's labourers. Poor fellow! he was dying all yesterday. Now, is it likely, that there have been devils waiting to catch his soul before judgment; or if there have, is it likely that they will be scared away by the tolling of a consecrated bell? It is superstition, it is a weak, miserable fancy. For a righteous man, I have no more serious apprehensions of danger in the passage of death, than what may be dispelled by the sight of a butterfly's reappearing in the sunshine among the fresh and fragrant flowers, after the rain and darkness of a stormy night. There are heavy visitations in life, and dark overshadowings, and manifold sorrows; but to them that look thoughtfully over the world, there is no lack of comfort; the lilies of the field, the fowls of the air, are all suggestive of faith; and butterflies, may they not be regarded as winged words of hope?'

'There is no monastery now to prepare one for death,' said Sir Francis; 'and if there were, a country house would be the better resort.'

'Oh yes!' said Master Rufford, 'they that would have gone into religious houses in their old age, ought now to seek rustic retirement. For myself, I should like to leave life calmly. I should not like

to present myself before my Maker, my soul hot with recent anger about business, or tremulous with surprise, or burning with the effects of some sudden lust; I would not willingly die with a heart full of earthly matters, debts that wanted discharging, neglects that ought to have been remedied, and anxiety about a last will and testament, just signed hastily perhaps and rashly.'

'It is not right,' said Master Brandon.

'Right! no, no, it is not, it is not. God is not to be met so lightly, at least not with impunity, I am persuaded. I say to Purbecque, 'George, George! what does it matter whether thou expire with twelve thousand pounds in thy strong box, or with twenty thousand pounds along with thee inside thy death-chamber; when the infinite concern is to die, with faith and feeling in thy heart?' Purbecque is secretly afraid of death, I know; I was once, but I am not now. I was thinking, last evening, as I sat here in the moonlight, of how many souls there must be dying all over the world every minute; and I thought that the spirits must flit through the passage of death, thick and fast, and silently, like night-moths; in darkness probably, mysterious but not terrific, however, and with the lights of the city of God in view from the very first, twinkling in the heavenly distance, dimly and solemnly like stars, beacon-lights for the soul to guide it in its solemn journey, its untried transition out of this world into one or other of

the many mansions of the Lord God, our Father's house.'

'Heaven grant that we and ours may all find it so,' said Master Brandon; 'and now we must leave you. Farewell.'

'God be with you! Good morning. God be with you both in the wicked city.'

At the way-side chapel nigh Pedderton-bank, the image of St Thomas à Becket, over the door, had the head broken off; on the top of the building one arm of the cross was destroyed; in the painted windows, the heads of all the figures were demolished: and at the door-side the stoup was filled with dirt in place of holy water. Sir Francis was about to remark on the shattered condition of the chapel, when he was accosted by a beggar.

'It is your worship is going to give an alms this fine morning, for the Holy Mother's sake. Oh, it is she that will bless your worship, and be glad to see you in heaven when ye please to go there; for ye are both of ye gentlemen born. Arrah, now, but ye are going to help the poor beggar! Oh, but it is a queer, hard-hearted country is this, without a drop of holy water in it to comfort a poor sinner against the devil. It is truth; and know it ye will, when ye get into the city: or ye may look at St Thomas of Canterbury there. It is a fine saint he was once; and a power of miracles he did in the land. I was wanting to say a matter to him myself; but as your worships may see there, he has got no head to mind

a body with. The heathen they are! They think to trouble the blessed saint St Thomas by breaking his image. But I know a priest who says that he is not the saint to be vexed about an image more or less. Thank your worships! The holy mother, born without sin, and all saints, and the holy evangels, all of them remember ye.'

'What a strange accent the poor man behind us has!' said Sir Francis.

'He is an Irishman.'

'Oh! Is that man one of the wild Irish?'

'Poor fellows!' said Master Brandon, 'They are wickedly used at home, and wretchedly here, I am afraid.'

'It is very certain that the poor fellow must miss Irish equality here in his lodgings, and every where else.'

'Why, what is that? For it is every way strange, after the blood and treasure which those people have cost us, how little we know about them, I might say care about them, only that it is such a shameful confession.'

'I was thinking of what an English knight told Froissart about their petty kings.'

'What was it?'

'That they would cause their minstrels, servants and varlets to sit with them, and to eat in their own dish, and to drink in their cups: showing him that the usage of their country was good; for they said, in all things, except their beds, they were and lived in common.'

'I remember the passage now. It is very quaint. Oh, look at the hawking party, down in the meadow there. One, two, three, seven, nine ladies!'

'To be sure,' said Sir Francis. 'You know what Peter of Blois says about fowling.'

'No. But it is something racy, I have no doubt.'

'That there is evidently something sadly corrupt and degenerate in the nature of these birds, for women succeed better than men in hawking.'

'Oh! the clerical misogynist!'

'Wait, Willoughby. Lend me your horse-pick; and while I use it, excuse if you can this proverb, which I heard a soldier make use of a week ago — 'Trust not three things, dog's teeth, horse's feet, and women's protestations.''

'No, no, Francis! Were I to excuse that, I should never be myself excused.'

'The English language, I think, is copious in sarcasms on the sex.'

'They are really uncouth expressions of regard. They are. For a compliment an Englishman cannot pay. I myself would any time rather take a cold bath in the middle of winter than do it.'

'It is because you have never had troubadours or minnesingers among you, to fashion for you a language of gallantry.'

'But we have had romancists of our own, and those of France have been like our own.'

'Lewd where they are natural, and tiresome where affected.'

'It is very nigh the truth,' said Master Brandon.

'The Character of Sir Launcelot by Bors de Ganes, in Morte d'Arthur, is the best passage in all the romances that I have ever read; and the best part of that is contained in three of the clauses of the speech, which Sir Bors makes over the dead body of his friend.'

'I do not remember it. What words do you refer to?'

'Thou wert the truest friend to thy lover, that ever bestrode horse: and thou wert the truest lover of a sinful man, that ever loved woman: and thou wert the meekest man and the gentlest, that ever ate in hall among ladies.'

'Simply expressed and very tender. Was it not he, Willoughby, who achieved sight of the Sangreal?'

'No! that was Sir Percival, a very different man, and one who thrust his sword into his own body, at the sight of a beautiful lady, mistaking her for an apparition of Satan.'

'Oh the idiot! and he of all knights to attain sight of the Sangreal!'

'Well now Francis, among your minnesingers, and it is so with the troubadours, there is an unpleasing sameness. Their rhyming is a mere knack; and their sentiments read like the remembrances of faint recollections.

'Oh, but Willoughby, their songs are some of them very lovely. However there is much truth in your remark. Among all the French rhymesters,

and among our Rhenish singers also, there is no commoner allusion than to the song of the nightingale as being melancholy, a thought originating with the Greek tale of Philomel; and it is as false in itself, as it is fictitious in origin. There is such a thing as tradition in feeling as well as doctrine, and the one may be as mistaken as the other. The nocturnal song of the nightingale is to me what it is, the veriest outpouring of gladness: it is not complaint, but proud, ungovernable exultation; it is the flowing over and above of delight, that is so abundant as not to be quite containable even in the large measurement of a summer's day.'

'Henry Frauenlob was a fellow-citizen of yours, I think: or rather you have fellow-citizenship with his memory.'

'Not exactly. Frauenlob or Praise-the-ladies was a native of Meissen: but he was a canon of our Dome Church. His reputation still lives in the city, and deservedly, although he himself has been dead and buried there these two hundred years. Albert of Strasburg writes in his chronicle, that 'on the eve of St Andrew, in the year 1318, Henry, sirnamed Frauenlob, was buried at Mentz, in the parvis of the great church, near unto the stairs, with marvellous solemnity. His corpse was carried by women from his dwelling-house unto the place of burial: and loudly did they moan and bewail his death, on account of the infinite praises which he had bestowed on womankind in his poetry. And

so much good wine was poured into his grave, that it overflowed with the libations.' Among all the panegyrics on Frauenlob, this record is the best existing — especially when you consider that he was not a courtier by profession, but that all this happened to a Dr in Theology.'

But there has been a better thing said of the mastersinger since —

> 'Unto the fairest flower of heaven, that blooms this earth along,
> To woman's worth, did he on earth devote his deathless song;
> And though the minstrel hath grown old, and faded be his frame,
> They yet requite what he in life hath done for love and them.'

Sir Francis continued, 'The sentiment of love has sadly degenerated since Henry of Meissen's days; and so has the expression of the feeling. Praise-the-ladies made beautiful songs in honor of woman, but your London gallants eat candles and filth in token of their devotion to their mistresses: last week I was astounded at the instances which I saw of the nasty custom.'

'The custom is common enough, and a strange proof it is of the perverted, coarse state of the public mind. Now, in France, courtiers are beginning to have their mistresses' portraits painted in their breviaries underneath the figure of the Virgin Mary; and the women to have the likenesses of their lovers underneath the pictures of the saints.'

'Religion has not undergone more modifications than the expression of love. Willoughby, I have

heard an antiquary say, that the history of the gentle passion might be written, and every century be shown to have exhibited peculiar characteristics; that love was considerate, unaffected, and tender in the tenth century; in the eleventh fiery and exacting; afterwards heroic; and then connected with the superstitions of the times; till it became as in the last century, unsentimental and vicious almost.'

'Well now,' said Master Brandon, 'yonder is St Winifred's church; there is an inn close by it, at which we will leave our horses. It cannot be more than five minutes before the wedding party will arrive. Heinrich Saltzburg did you say the name of your friend was?'

'Yes. But I am not much acquainted with him; his father I know well and I esteem him much.'

'I thought, Francis, that none of the officers of any of your Hanseatic factories, in foreign countries, were allowed to be married men.'

'We cannot insist on their being more self-denying than the priesthood. But the truth is, the practice has been relaxing some time; and it is not so essential in small towns as in large ones.'

'I grant you, that London is not of the same commercial importance to your Hanse, as Cologne, Nuremburg, or Novogorod; but London is not a minor city.'

'Do not be jealous; I never meant that it was. I was alluding to the young man's being about to

be sent to one of our settlements in the fen-country, King's-Lynn, or else Boston.'

Passing through the church-yard gate, Master Brandon said, 'Sir Gosford, the priest, is an intimate of Master Asheton's, a young and very pious man, and learned, considering his years.'

'Your English burying-grounds are very pleasing — no! not pleasing; pensive, penserose, if I may Anglicize an Italian word. I have never seen in all Father-land a God's-acre so pretty as this church-yard.'

'Why do you Germans say God's-acre, since everywhere the earth is the Lord's.'

'It is because all the tenants of a churchyard are altogether, every particle of them, God's; but in the living world, mammon has a share; and with most men, it is only just as they belong to the grave, that the prince of this world ceases to have part in their thoughts, and use in their members.'

'Six hundred years has St Winifred's church stood here,' said Master Brandon. 'And eighteen several times have the sentient, acting, reasoning inhabitants of this parish been emptied into the depths of this ground, the verdure of which is as fresh as ever. One generation passeth and another generation succeedeth, but the earth remaineth for ever.'

'It is true up to this time, but it is not eternal truth; for St Peter says, that the heavens and the earth are transitory like man; and I dare say, are

more so in proportion to their vastitude. There is no appearance yet of Saltzburg and his bride, a new generation coming up to the altar, over the bones of the dead.'

'Francis, it is a melancholy thought, the connexion there is between the happiness of one and the evil of another. The way that I find so smooth and flowery, is what another has trodden down before me, and watered with his tears. How often the master's wealth is an extract out of his servant's poverty. A man's riches may be increased without robbery, and yet not righteously; or, if in innocence, still not unaccompanied by other men's sufferings. It may be through the ill-adjusted courses of trade, or through the capricious allotments of fortune, but so it is, that one hall is often splendid with what ought to have been the little comforts of a thousand neighbouring cottages; and there is many a castle in which there is prodigally burning all day and all night the fuel, which in some manner ought properly to have found its way into widows' houses, and on to cold hearths; and were their history thoroughly known, the wines on many a rich man's table would drink like the blood and tears of the oppressed.'

'Oh! Willoughby, it is very sad; men are so apt to think that what is lawful is right; but it is very curious, how the roots of one man's prosperity interlace with the causes of another man's misfortune.'

'It is so through all life, Francis. With the birth of their first child the parents go over to an older generation; as we grow up, they grow old; our wisdom is derived from their experience of hardships; it is through their vacant places that we emerge into business; and over the graves of the dead that we walk to marriage.'

'It is melancholy.'

'Still it ought not, Francis, to be a gloomy but a pathetic thought, a consideration wherewith to restrain the insolence of joy, and out of which, to discharge those many claims which are made upon us, not as of right but for mercy.'

On the door of the church were several printed proclamations appertaining to church matters, one of which prohibited the perusal of certain specified books on religion; another was against giving the consecrated bread, the nicknames of Round Robin and Jack in the Box; and another was against desecration of churches, especially against 'taking horses, mules, or other animals into cathedrals, churches, or chapels, and thereby making the same, which are properly appointed to God's service and common prayer, like a stable or common inn, or rather a den or sink of all unchristiness,' and to forbid 'any such quarreling, shooting, or bringing horses or mules into or through the churches, or by any other means irreverently to use the churches, upon pain of his Majesty's indignation, and imprisonment.'

When the bridal party arrived, the service was conducted by Master Gosford; at the conclusion of which, his friend Master Asheton ascended the pulpit, and delivered a marriage sermon, as follows: —

'Wives submit yourselves unto your husbands, as unto the Lord.

'For the husband is the wife's head, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and the same is the Saviour of the body.

'Therefore as the Church is in subjection, even so, let the wives be to their husbands in every thing.

'Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church, and gave himself for it.'

'Of the relations of life many have plainly a religious significance; and but for our blindness, no doubt, all of them would have, home and kindred, country and occupation. Human life is not less capable of a spiritual interpretation than a cathedral, in which every component part has a mystical meaning; its cross-like form suggesting the memory of Christ's death; its lofty towers being emblems of the heavenly aspirations upspringing thence; its painted windows adorned with Christian portraitures, and with scenes from holy writ, reminding the beholders of the true light, which lighteth every man which cometh into the world; the screen, typical of that darkness of Divine Providence which intervenes between the Church-militant of earth, and the Church-triumphant of heaven; and in the

loft above, the rood reared on high, setting forth to spectators that it is only by passing underneath the cross, that religious consolations are arrived at.

'Ready acquiescence in low views of life is our besetting sin. It is the darkness within which prevents perception of the light that is without; for all things are full of God, and if it were not for our own ungodliness, we should see as well as know it. We resemble unlearned priests reading the sublime prayers of the Latin ritual, ignorant the while of the fervency, the penitence, the supplication, the thanksgiving, the truth, the trust, the joy, of which their words are the utterance. In like manner, the offices and occurrences of life have all a higher purpose in them, than we in our unenlightened state imagine.

'Much of the vice and misery in the world exists through want of spiritual insight into our human being. 'Where no vision is the people perish,' for in such circumstances their 'wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish.'

'Never had the corruptest theology more need of reformation, than our sentiments at present on the subject of domestic life. There exists now as deplorable an evil as the Jewish abandonment of Jehovah for the service of the Canaanitish gods; for there is a failure of discerning the moral import of life, of the divinely ordained relations of life, those which are cognate with the soul, as distinguished from those which are accidental, of human device, and superinduced.

'The imperfection is not in the outward circumstances, nor in the intellect, but it is in the will. It is not an imperfection to be remedied, but it is one to be magnified by the growth of what is called civilization. Refinements are an increase of sensualness, or at least an increased danger of it. It is the most luxurious period of a nation, which developes the worst infidelity — that which believes in nothing higher than the objects of sense, nothing but what can be either seen, heard, or felt. It is not in the wilderness amid privations, nor in poverty amid sorrows, but it is amid men, whose wants are all anticipated, amid them who can help themselves most, that God is thought of, trusted, believed in the least; and not God only, but the ideas also of disinterestedness, purity, right, and immortality. Universally is this the case; it is individual experience, and it is historical fact.

'There is no more melancholy forewarning to be learned from past ages, than that of human liability to retrogression. The mere recountment of the names of past empires and peoples is a solemn lesson — Babylon the Great, and Greece the Beautiful, and Rome, 'Eternal city,' Egypt primeval empire once, and miserable province now, and the people whom the Lord brought 'out of Egypt in a mighty hand, and with a stretched out arm, with great terribleness, both in signs and wonders' — Israel, fifteen hundred years the people of God, and now these fifteen hundred years the scorn of the

Gentiles, 'scattered among all people from the one end of the world unto the other!' The stability of empires how uncertain it is! 'The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the spirit;' and so also is the possession of empire. It may be believed of earlier empires, but it is known, that of Greece and Rome, their moral corruption was their ruin. They are instances, proofs indisputable, that while families and peoples are advancing in wealth, rule, and knowledge, they may at the same time be retrograding in honour, fidelity, self-controul, and capability of disinterested deeds. From past experience it is abundantly evident how the conveniences of refined life, how riches, and the multitude of corporeal enjoyments may be but the deceitful decorations of a natural career, terminating in a ruin worse than the barbarism out of which it commenced.

'In the history of a whole people it is more largely discernible; but there is not a voluptuary anywhere, nay, there is scarcely an individual, whose experience would not manifest, how liable the human heart that loves pleasure, is to be without God in the world! 'Verily,' said Jesus unto his disciples, 'Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.' It was not his wealth was the rich man's hindrance, but it was the rich man's state of mind; and that mental state we

may be infected with, nay, through the influence of society we are, and that perhaps perilously.

'There is ever a tendency in man, which only God's grace can strengthen him against, to allow his soul to succumb to worldly, sensual, material influences. We may not actually, perhaps, break the commandments, and yet we may keep them only in a feeble spirit: and faith we may never perhaps formally renounce; and yet it may be weakened into almost non-existence within us by the worldly spirit, with which we may insensibly be contaminated by the manners and conversation of persons around us.

The history of all philosophy, ever since man first began to investigate into the wonders of his own nature, the biography of every man who has been excellent in intellectual and moral worth; the history of religion in all its various dispensations, and especially of the Gospel, among the nations, and during the many ages wherein it has been professed; these are all evidence of the tendency there is in things seen and temporal, to quench all interest, then all care, and finally, all belief concerning the things which are not seen, but which are eternal.

'This unbelieving, worldly spirit, doth now manifest itself, among other things, in the unworthy feelings which are prevalent on the subject of marriage; in the vanity of the endeavours which men make after happiness; and in the growing tendency

which there is, to seek spiritual improvement, too exclusively in the perusal of books, and in sermon-hearing, which are things external to the soul, instead of in the soul's own unfolding, by means of the joyous, earnest, devout fulfilment of those relations, which God has himself ordained that human beings shall occupy, in regard to Himself of dependant and worshipper: and towards one another, of husband and wife, parent and child, of friendship, neighbourhood, and fellow-citizenship.

'My brother and sister! I pray you to accept the few remarks which I am about to make; for an argument I do not purpose, nor much formality either, in the order of what truths I shall endeavour to utter.

'Marriage,' Dr Wickliffe saith, 'is a Sacrament, and a figure of the ghostly wedlock between Christ and the Holy Church.'

'There is no other human connexion which hath so high or so great a significance, as that between man and woman. For a king even, his coronation is a much less matter than his marriage, as having less spiritual import. It is not written, that in the beginning God created man, rich and poor, philosopher and peasant, but male and female created he them. There is no monarch's signet that is typical of as much duty as the wedding ring is.

'Marriage among Christians is not only for earthly convenience, but also for heavenly good: and if the

spiritual purpose be not answered thereby, there are none so frivolous as not to feel the failure acutely, whether they know the cause of their suffering or not.

'Of primitive Christian marriage, Tertullian speaketh in these words — 'What a union of two believers, to have one hope, one desire, one course of life, one service of God in common, the one with the other! Both like brother and sister, undivided in heart and flesh, or rather really two in one flesh, fall down together on their knees and pray. Christ's peace is on such as these. Where two are there is he; and where he is evil cannot come.'

'An irreligious is a sensual union: and sensuality is volatile. The many irksome marriages which there are, are miserable, most of them, for the want of an indwelling, spiritual sentiment. The woman is a traitoress to herself who is careless about her husband's piety; for the wife can seldom be loved long and warmly, unless she can invest herself with a spiritual interest, unless she can engage her husband to think of her as 'a living soul'— a spirit who shall outlast his earthly fortunes, and the earth itself, and of which he is, under God, the earthly protector; a soul, the heavenly value of which, is contingent, to some extent, on his earthly usage thereof.

'But for Christianity, women would have been still mere objects of lust. Pliny saith, that among the Greeks the betrothal-ring was sometimes of

iron, — a proper type of heathen matrimony; but with us Christians, it is of gold, like the city of God, towards the gate of which, it is the purpose of Christian marriage to make man and woman helpmates together, while solemnly journeying on earth.

'It is because of their irreligiousness that so many homes are joyless; it is for want of that infinite depth of sentiment, of which Christianity is in the human soul the fountain, that marriages are so many of them so vapid: it is because conversation is never in heaven, that in so many houses it is so monotonous, so without soul or interest; and it is for want of the preservative power of religion, that husband and wife so often find the warmth and delicacy of their early affection fail.

'The common notion is false, that where man and woman are both worldly alike, that there the absence of spirituality is no hindrance to their happiness; as may be inferred from this common circumstance, that the veriest debauchee requires purity in his wife. Alas! for that home in which the highest theme of the husband's discourse, is the last acute bargain, which he made in business, or the levity, coarse perhaps, as well as trifling, which he last heard at the tavern. Alas! for that home in which the wife, on opening her heart discloses no traces of any nobler feelings than such as the larder or the laundry might suggest. Alas! for her who establishes no higher claims on her husband's

regards, than mere fidelity to his person, and frugality and order in his house.

'Marriage is an institution of God, and can possibly be enjoyed, only in the spirit of God.

'Religious sensibility is in the human heart what the divine Almightiness is in the foliage of trees, the fragrance of flowers, the loftiness of mountains, and the lustre of the stars: even when unperceived, it is the fulness, it is the soul of bliss, especially of the purer pleasures, family love, friendship, and anticipation of the future.

'Out of the heart are the issues of life, mortal and immortal, both alike. Connubial affection flows freely and surely only through those channels of love, which prayer keeps open from obstruction. In every household the warmth of pure joyance is, very much, proportionate to the flame of devotion; and in most hearts, the purity of their attachment, is measurable by the extent of their faith.

'To be happy together long, a man and wife must be in Christ. Of deep love reverence is one essential, and one which inevitably decays after marriage, unless the felt sacredness of the soul counteract the effect of familiarity with the person.

'The completeness of mutual confidence is another element in love. Now no human beings do or can maintain entire faith in one another, but those who also feel full belief in God. There are instances of exception, but they are only few; for, as a rule, it is only a religious is a confiding person.

'Of affection between man and wife there are other component feelings, of which, in like manner, religion is the source: in brief, it is the soul of married life, it is the strength of married faith, it is the preservative of married joy.

'The life of God in the soul is not only a right, but a vigorous state of mind; it is not only devotion, but is added strength to every other feeling, the affection especially of husband and wife.

'Husband and wife praying together before God, are not only united in temporary thought, but more closely still; for while kneeling, side by side, they two have the arms of the Almighty round them, the protecting, love-inspiring, presence of the one God of their faith.

'Marriage has not only capacities of happiness, but of moral and religious improvement. There is no other feeling of the human heart is rightly such a support of personal religion, as conjugal affection is. A man and woman dwelling together without the love of God, is a melancholy sight, for it is such a loss of spiritual opportunity. Nay, holy men have believed that the nuptial is a sinful state, unless enjoyed in the fear of God; and certainly, without that, it tends to sensualize the mind; it is in that case a heathen alliance, appropriate patrons of which are Venus and the idol-gods; and on such a connexion the blessings of the church does not abide, but returns again like the apostolic benediction of peace, when supplicated on an unworthy house;

the happiness thereof is evanescent, its duration is weariness, it is the profanest of all profane states, and its end — its end! Oh, think how ominously awful is that state of mind, or else how terrible must have been its experience, which is conscious to itself of a secret complacency in the severance of conjugal bonds! Remember the spiritual meaning of marriage, and then the possibility of joy in its dissolution is infernal; it is like a soul's rejoicing over its own ruin, over its own lost sense of purity, its extinct capacity of prayer, and its vanished opportunities of right!

'Great are the spiritual uses of marriage. The serious seeker after righteousness experiences often a repugnance to speak of his moral feelings, of his sense of sin, of the law in his members warring with that in his heart, a conflict, to the terror and violence of which, perhaps, every faculty of his soul may be thrilling most intensely; also, many a one longs, but is unable to speak, concerning his heavenly desires, and so they are sometimes blighted within him for want of sympathy. Occasionally, too, a person is visited with religious doubts, which he shrinks from revealing; and so, through an unwise suppression, they fester into corrosive poisons within him, weakening the certainties of his faith, making self-examination distasteful first, and then disgusting: and thus, oftentimes, a soul is crippled, weakened, and embittered, by unimportant scruples in doctrine, the operation of which ought to have

been the opening, and thereby the strengthening of the mind.

'Sympathy is an essential of the human heart. There is many a soul of noble capacities lying in sluggish darkness, for want of some word out of itself, some human tone, some little encouragement, and that, perhaps, so slight, that even a child might utter it. Others there are, who are awake to righteousness, to all the lofty attainments that are possible therein on this earth, who revolve in their minds many plans of good, and who yet make no progress, for want of a quickening impulse external from themselves. Often and often, for lack of a friend's understanding word, does a good man's modest diffidence grow into religious sloth. This want of sympathy, this dependence on external help, is God's appointment: it is our nature; it is incidental to us as social creatures: it is an ordained occasion for the infusion of faith and energy into the soul, and which, at the same time, carry along with them an increase of love, a contributory effect of the conversational channel through which they flow.

'The formation of Eve out of the substance of Adam, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, is typical of the state of their descendants. Manhood and womanly nature are supplements, the one to the other; they are one another's perfection. Wedlock is the completion of two beings, it is a fitting of them to attain, by conjoint effort, an excellence impossible to either of them alone.

'Between husband and wife there ought to be no more religious reserve than between man and God; for they ought to confess themselves to one another as freely as to their Creator.

'The Catholic confessional is an institution according to nature, only the scene of it ought not to be the church, but the chamber; and the agents therein not priests and laics, but friend with friend. Unacknowledged sin lies heavily and long, not only on the conscience, but on the whole soul, obscuring its moral perception, paralyzing the will, when it would apply to the right; and sometimes it seems almost to assume a personality of its own, and to dare and defy the despairing soul to attempt self-inspection, prayer, or Christian endeavour of any kind. Oppressed with the sense of guilt, it is not only painful for a man, but even the remains of his better nature will oftentimes shrink from religious meditation, as though from sacrilege. And not unfrequently, when a sinner would first betake himself to prayer, there instinctively occurs to him the discouraging thought, 'What hast thou to do, that thou shouldst take God's covenant in thy mouth?' And often, when a person has wrought out his repentance and his restoration to grace in unnoticed secrecy; and even when he feels in his heart the assurance of the divine pardon, he is yet conscious of a further want; since, restored to God, he wants restoring to himself, to his own self-respect — for there is no moral strength in the man who is all

distrust: with the storm of temptation around him, and the sea of life raging underneath him, he is like St Peter, who, even when walking by miraculous power, began to sink in the waves for want of a friendly voice.

'To dispel this distressing, discouraging sense of distrust, there is nothing so efficacious as the encouragement of a friend, as the utterance of affectionate belief in our moral recovery. The expression of hope for a sinner is like a communication of spiritual strength from the speaker. God has made us mutual agents of good. Next to divine help, as afforded through Scripture, prayer, and the Holy Spirit, confidential discourse is the best aid to righteousness. There is no such strengthening word as that uttered in secret by affection. Of earthly helps, there is none other is such a preservation from sin as mutual trust. Through the wants of our souls, as well as through the word of Scripture, does God exhort us 'to confess our faults one to another, and pray for one another.' There is, or should be, no spiritual intimacy like that between husband and wife, whose hearts ought not only to be sources of love for one another, but of religious encouragement and strength, and ought also, after guilt, to be fountains for one another of moral healing.

'Religion is a household quite as much as a church feeling. Good order among servants is better secured by the fear of God, than by the threats

of a master; and with this additional difference, that in the one case they are made abject, but in the other cheerful, earnest, and holy, like the attendants on the person of the Lord Christ were. For cheerfulness there is no device like diffusing a spirit of faith, inasmuch as where religion is, men and women there, children, flowers, animals, the four seasons, the Sabbath, and all things that are God's, are loved; every day of the week then becomes a saint's-day in feeling, and life like a long festival. Work done as in God's sight is done in joy; and joy, entertained as in his presence, is purity itself, and a preparation for still greater joy in heaven.

'Faults are incidental to our imperfect natures everywhere; but in a religious house, even inadvertencies are not without their compensating pleasure, since the master reflects with himself, while pardoning his servants, 'Even thus does God, through Christ, forgive me;' and rightly does he reason thus, since the grace to forgive is one token that the recipient thereof is himself forgiven: so that what are unmitigated troubles to the worldly, to the spiritually-minded occasion thoughts of the Redeemer, of God, and of heaven.

'Yes, religion in a household doth make it rejoice evermore. Whenever the mind is pleasantly enlivened by one matter, whatever it be, all other objects, then, become agreeable stimulants. The man who is animated by a public rejoicing, feels not only the street pleasanter, but his own house

also; and the tradesman who achieves a piece of fortunate business, finds that the same mental excitement, which was increased activity in the counting-house, is at home, warmth towards his wife, good humour with the servant, and tenderness with his children. In the same manner, but more congenially, does 'joy in the Holy Ghost' combine with family love, and sustain, refine, and strengthen it.

'The religious is the happy, and the only purely happy state of mind. Happiness is in the soul; it is not external to the body like our clothes are. The fountain of delight is in the heart and not in the purse. Happiness does not consist much in the wealth, honour, and magnificence of our outward circumstances; it is not communicable to the mind, after the manner of warmth to the body. Had happiness been comprised in the possession of palaces, power, and multitudinous means of bodily enjoyment, King Solomon would have been the happiest, as well as the wisest of men, instead of his bitter experience being, 'vanity of vanities! all is vanity!' 'Oh, but,' some persons think to themselves, 'it was his state of mind must have been wrong;' and so it was. The only essential of happiness, among this world's goods, is a share in food and raiment. Possessed of these, he that is still wretched, would have been wretched also, on Solomon's throne. What pure happiness is felt in the palace, would still be possessed, were the palace to contract into a cottage.

'Readily does the understanding assent to the doctrine, but, oh! how hard it is to persuade the will that happiness is chiefly mental. Fame, station, power, may minister to pride; and to sensual gratification wealth is indispensable; but none of these things are necessary to happiness, which may co-exist with, but does not consist in them. Now, if neither pride, nor sensual tendencies are to be administered to by opulence, what is there, then, in the employment of taking care of riches? What is there in a baron's business; in the daily circumstances befalling a wealthy man, what peculiarity is there constituting happiness? There is nothing. Clothed in Flemish woollens, an unhappy man might as well envy purple, silk, and fine linen, on account of their warmth, as reasonably as for any imaginary delight in wearing them. It is the right is the happy state of mind; and that is a gift neither of Mammon, nor of Plutus, but of God only.

'Oh, the sorrowful hearts there are, under rich robes! Melancholy, woe unutterable, weariness of life, fearful looking for of death, heaviness of soul, loathing of existence — these all are as ordinary in the castle as the cottage, and commoner probably. For what is embroidery of silk and gold? What is a portcullis, or a high, strongly-hinged gate, or massive masonry — what are these, as defence against spiritual visitations — the horrors which conscience can evoke out of the soul's own innermost recesses, against the bitterness of spirit,

against the misgivings, anxieties, fears, agonies of mind, which often oppress them so horribly, so unspeakably, that are without God in their souls? Faith is the only exorcism of the thousand inquietudes, the paralyzing despondency, the wasting discontents, which so frequently haunt the soul, in the darkness of this its earthly scene of trial. Even as God is the strength of the world, and the pervading presence of its glorious scenery, and of its plenteousness in field and meadows, valley, plain, and vineyard, and in stream and ocean — so is the idea of God the strength of the soul; it is vast, quickening, congenial, satisfying; and under its influence, legions of haunting imaginations, and besetting hosts of afflictive feelings, are put to flight, superseded in their place by warmth, and gladness, and freedom.

'Worldliness discontents men with small delights, making them only prize those which are costly, modish, and difficult of attainment; the very enjoyment of which, if not sin in itself, is often sinful in tendency, being for the most part, a proud indulgence. Of some pleasures, the possession may be harmless, while the habitual pursuit may be most pernicious, for to be too anxious about pleasure sensualizes the mind. Of social honors, there are some, the enjoyment of which may be most innocent, but to covet which is most certainly most perilous; since it is ruin to the soul to pursue fleshly pleasure, by means of spiritual helps, by means of

that earnestness of mind, that anxiety of soul, the only rightful objects of which are God and goodness. 'Take no thought, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed. If primitive disciples might not distress themselves for even the necessaries of life, then for us to be disquieted concerning its pleasures must be most dangerous.

'Inordinate desire of unattainable or costly gratification deprives the heart of its simple relish, and puffs the mind up with disdain for the less delights of life, as being mean, both by their smallness and their commonness.

'Of this evil, religion is the preventive; and it is also the correction; for it simplifies the taste, which luxury has debauched; it enlarges the heart, which the eager pursuit of some selfish end has narrowed; the affections it freshens and makes spontaneous, when they have grown rigid through pride or disuse; and, instead of contempt, it inspires reverence for the smaller joys of life — their multitudinousness being revered as an excellence, and a special condescension in the Creator; and their facility of attainment being regarded as exempting them from the liability to absorb, and thereby degrade the mind, through the eagerness of pursuit.

'Strange it is, that little pleasures should be esteemed as below man's regard, while the fall of a sparrow to the ground, the brief existence of a May-fly, the blossoming of a flower, are not beneath

God's providence. Strange that men should let their hearts harden with pride against enjoyments, on account of their commonness, when there is not a forest which they behold, but on every single tree, every single leaf, thrust itself forth as a bud in the spring, and in the summer, unfolded itself to the sun and the wind, only through power of God's affording.

'Those selfish gratifications, which are costly, are most of them worthless. Also, pleasures, like virtue, ought to be unconscious. If a person think much of his virtue, he loses it by becoming vain; and if his joys be too much thought about, their delightfulness is evaporated by the warmth of anxiety; and it is thus that delicious anticipations prove often such disappointing realities.

'The prohibition against being 'lovers of pleasure,' is itself a provision for pleasure, a security, to keep the fine sense of enjoyment from blunting.

'Of all lawful, all the purer, sweeter, and more permanent delights, Almighty God is the source; and such happiness as God affords can be fully enjoyed, only in such state of mind as God approves. Piety is preparation for heaven; piety, too, is on earth, a capacity of pleasure. As Holy writ saith, 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, which hath the promise of the life present, and of that which is to come.'

'There are some persons who have their imaginations so excited by the possibility of some distant good, as to lose all taste for the little delights which

husband and wife, master and servant, parent and child, may devise and reciprocate hourly almost. Which is the luckier man, he that can be happy in the smile of his wife, or he that must wait, wait, wait for the smile of fortune, and wait in vain, perhaps?

'In this world, there is nothing of such value as affection; and the most trifling expression of it, even though it be but a single word of endearment, is in the best ears a pleasanter sound than that of gold pieces.

''The price of a virtuous woman is far above rubies,' Solomon says. Were there allotted to any one a female figure of solid gold, as a companion for life; who is there but would beg that it might be of silver only, that it might speak: and then of an inferior metal still, if it might only feel; and, then, that it might be, like himself, of earth, might it only accompany him about? And yet, oh, human inconsistency! husbands be many of them heedless of home-joys, as not being an increase of wealth.

'Man is created to be a living soul, and not to be an alchymist; and the real want of his heart is sympathy, affection, love, and not the philosopher's stone. It would not be more unreasonable to transplant a favourite flower out of black earth into gold dust, than it is for a person to let money-getting harden his heart into contempt, or into impatience of the little attentions, the merriments and the caresses of domestic life.

'Willingness is capacity for pleasure; and the gentle, softening nature of religion has an immediate tendency to produce it in the mind: and possessed of willingness our hearts would thrill, not only to rare and great events, like revolutions in society, or large gains in trade, but also to every breath of life, even from a child's lips, or in a neighbour's 'good morrow.'

'Man will not endure to be happy according to nature; and hence, not only the porter at the gate, but the sparrow on the palace-top, and the martin under the eaves, have all of them more pleasure than the prince has withinside.

'Happiness is where the kingdom of heaven is, it is within us; and, again, like the kingdom of heaven, it is to 'be found by seeking,' and that to any extent; it is to be gained very much through contentment, peace, and willingness. For the enjoyment of life, a man's mind ought to be open, pure from dissatisfaction, clear and fresh like a dew-drop, which, small globule as it is, does yet receive into and reflect from itself, all the flowers around, and the trees with all their leaves, together with the blue firmament, the sun, and the clouds.

'Happiness is like manna; it is to be gathered in grains, and enjoyed every day; it will not keep; it cannot be accumulated; nor have we to go out of ourselves, or into remote places to gather it, since it is rained down from heaven, at our very doors, or rather withinside them.

'A series of little services are commonly more pleasure in the aggregate than a solitary act of considerable beneficence. A fortune of small gains, slowly but surely accumulating, undoubtedly affords incomparably a greater delight than sudden riches; and a wife's tender expressions, heard two or three times a-day, amount at the end of the year to vastly more and sweeter happiness than election to some high office by the united suffrages of the whole parish.

'Of earthly relations, those of husband and wife, parent and child, friend and neighbour, master and servant, constitute much the larger portion of man's happiness; and are more important any of them than all others together. It is in the observance, the refinement, the strengthening of these commonest, these greatest, these primal relations, that happiness is increased, and not in the inordinate accumulation of money, the acquisition of empty fame, or in luxurious indulgences.

'Happiness is to be attained in the accustomed chair by the fireside, more than in the honorary occupation of civic office; in a wife's love infinitely more than in the favour of all human beings else; in children's innocent and joyous prattle more than in the hearing of flattery; in the reciprocation of little and frequent kindnesses between friend and friend, more than in some occasional and dearly-bought indulgence; in the virtue of contentment, more than in the anxious achievements of wealth, distinction,

and grandeur; in change of heart, more than in change of circumstance; in full, firm trust in Providence, more than in hoping for fortune's favour; in a growing taste for the beauties of nature, more than in the fee-simple inheritance of whole acres of land; in the observance of neatness and regularity, household virtues, rather than in the means of ostentatious, and, therefore, rare display; in a hand-maiden's cheerfulness, more than in the improved tone of politics; and in the friendship of our next door neighbour, more than in the condescending notice of my lord duke.

'Happiness, then, must be sought for in simplicity, and not in costliness; in the perpetually recurring, more than in the rare; in abiding peace, rather than in temporary raptures; and next after the well of living water which springeth up into everlasting life, in no sources else so sedulously, as in those fountains, which are fed by the never-failing love of relatives and friends.

'You twain are become one flesh: henceforth, you have one fortune in the world — a community in good and evil: and in the world to come, whether or not you shall have joint inheritance of the same, is greatly contingent on the conjoint character of your religious endeavours; which ought, indeed, to be now in resolution of two-fold strength — in heavenly longing also of redoubled earnestness, and in virtuous achievement of twice as great success as hitherto, inasmuch as your religious helps

and responsibilities are by your union together in Christ, so exceedingly magnified.

'Under the old dispensation, it was commanded believers to write the law of God upon the door-posts of their houses: but the new dispensation, which is not so much a body of precepts as it is instruction in the Spirit, will have Christian houses always and altogether, as though the church of God were at them. Strive, by your reading of Christ's covenant, and by solemn thought thereon, to fill yourselves and household with that cheerful, gentle, heaven-aspiring spirit diffused by Christ's presence through every house which he visited, whether Zaccheus the publican's, or that of Lazarus at Bethany. Suffer not worldly-mindedness to darken your eyes to the spiritual glories of a Christian home, for there is a joy therein, the loss of which is not to be compensated by the sight of costly and luxurious ornament.

'Oh, think not meanly of the lowliest home, for on this side of the wall of the city of God there is, or ought to be, no holier place. God himself is therein; human souls are therein; the records of Christ's covenant are producible therein; there is worship therein; in each human being that dwells within it, there is going on in his breast that most mysterious, world-old, most momentous struggle between good and evil, sin and virtue, with their consequents, sorrow and bliss; and, finally, in its chambers, deaths one ofter another must occur —

mortality's solemn dismissals of its subjects, unto the King eternal, immortal, and invisible.

'Oh, judge not meanly of the spiritual capacities of domestic life! The concentrated knowledge of whole libraries, of doctors most famous, of theologians most acute, of philosophers most accomplished, and of historians the most erudite; the results of a whole life of painful study among books, and of diligent inquiry with the learned, invaluable as they are in themselves, and most essential to the well-being of society, are yet not to be compared with the insight into human nature, its spiritual laws, exposures, wants, and satisfactions; with the moral habitudes, the thoughtfulness, the self-possession, the sweet and even temper, and the familiarity in applying principles to emergent uses; with the readiness of sympathy, and the tenderness of feeling, of which home is the proper school; and in which domestic duties, discharged in the fear of God, are, if not the exclusive, yet by much the most efficient instruction.

'Books and solitude have their uses, and for the earnest aspirant after spiritual perfection they are altogether indispensable; but they are not the only, nor yet the chief means of the soul's growth in grace, which is advanced by thorough acquaintance with the woes and the wants, the wishes and the workings of one human soul, far more efficiently than by the diligent perusal of a hundred folios. Such effect as is produced by even an uninstructed

woman's speaking out of the fulness of her heart, could, for spiritual profit, be less dispensed with than a professor's lecture, deduced from the wisdom of the ancients. Knowledge shall vanish away, but charitable feeling never faileth.

'The discharge of duty to one another is not only exemption from the sin of omitting it; it is also growing strength, and it is self-knowledge. There is no one duty, but the earnest — not the careless and formal, or only customary — the really earnest performance thereof, thrills the mind with a consciousness of power, which is itself an increase of strength; but quickens into activity the disinterested feeling, and throws up from the soul's depths, as it were, into our notice, truths which, for their beauty and worth, it surprises us should ever have occurred to our minds. Out of the heart are the issues of life. Books are but like broken cisterns of knowledge, compared with that purer wisdom which is the spontaneous efflux of the soul, when pervaded by a strong devout desire to discharge righteously any one out of our manifold human duties.

'It is out of the bosom of our earthly families that we are born into God's great family of heaven.

'My brother! Remember thou, not only that the man is the head of the woman in authority, but also, that thou art for thy wife the excellency of human nature, her all, all that ever shall be hers of that fondness, that heroism, that unsuspecting con-

fidence, that noble manner of thinking so dear to woman; and of which virtues she has this day been believingly married to thyself as the archetype.

'My sister! Remember thou, that of thy husband thou art his whole possession in the delicacy and tenderness of womankind; his all of female worth. Remember that, in gentle endurance thou art for him his Griseldis; in trust-worthiness, his Lucretia; in humble beneficence, his Dorcas; his Penelope in faithfulness; his Laura in loveliness of character; and in self-sacrificing love his Alcestis.

'By thought, prayer, and effort, strive then to maintain your undiminished height in one another's esteem; and strive you must, since even the love of God can be sustained by endeavour only.

'Finally, the observations which have been made on marriage and its moral uses, and concerning happiness and the means of its attainment, I pray you to accept. And I pray, God also bless you both. Amen.'

CHAPTER XI.

Where should the scholar live? In solitude or in society? In the green stillness of the country, where he can hear the heart of nature beat, or in the dark, grey city, where he can hear and feel the throbbing heart of man? I will make answer for him, and say, in the dark, grey city. Oh, they do greatly err, who think that the stars are all the poetry which cities have; and therefore that the poet's only dwelling should be in sylvan solitudes, under the green roofs of trees. — LONGFELLOW.

REMOUNTING their horses, Master Brandon and Sir Francis Farel rode on towards the city.

'I was greatly rejoiced,' Sir Francis said, 'to hear Master Asheton attempt to Christianize feeling on the subject of domestic life. A strange state religion has been in and is in still — saints worshipped for anything but sanctity; miracles believed in as having been wrought at their shrines, and yet no faith in that providence in which we live and move; churches built by man's hands, frequented, and beautified as means to holiness, but common life disregarded, though its institutions are of God's ordaining. However, there has been progress, especially in the treatment of women. Did you notice in the church, that fine monumental brass of Dame Eleanor Cheeke? What a reverential attitude, was it not? What a lovely expression of faith!

With all its faults, our Christian is infinitely superior to Grecian civilization. Common emblems on the monuments of Athenian women were an owl, a pair of reins, and a muzzle.'

'Meaning what?'

'The owl, her wisdom; the reins, her governance; and the muzzle, her secresy.'

'One knows not, Francis, which to pity most, the women or the men.'

'Oh, pity the women, since it was the men made their state so wretched.'

'And yet they ought to have inspired their masters with more reverential feeling: instead of which as you know, Grecian marriages degenerated much from the affectionate intercourse of the Homeric ages.'

'Perhaps so. But, Willoughby, there is much truth in the Spanish proverb, that wine and women are what men make them.'

'If it be so, it is a pity, but men remember it; for no matter how flat the contents, men never ill-treat their wine-casks.'

'Saltzburg will be happy with his wife, I hope,' said Sir Francis.

'I never saw a happier pair.'

'Oh, that is all seeming. Of the bridegroom's present transport, much of it is transient excitement of the nerves, and not perennial happiness out of the soul. And the bride, she is proud of her loveliness and its power; it is uncertain though, for her beauty is only skin-deep.'

'Francis, you unromantic'—

'It is truth. Her beauty would quite strip off with her skin; it is very perishable; a space of ten years may ruin it; so would an attack of the small-pox, a habit of drinking, or any one of many cutaneous eruptions.'

'What next?'

'I do not know; but I will tell you what may happen before, and that is some such misfortune as Jacob's; who thought he was married to Rachel, but in the morning behold it was Leah.'

'Among the heathen,' said Master Brandon, 'such a discovery did not matter much. But Christian marriage is so sacred, and in its happier instances, is so essentially a union of souls, that inadequate knowledge of one another's characters is much to be deplored for both parties.

'Deplored! It is one of the greatest evils of society. Before a lover's eyes visions of domestic happiness are ever floating; he is all hope; but when matrimony transforms ideal expectation into tangible reality, it is often through a process of grievous narrowing. All things for a lover are full of promise,—and illusion very often and consequent disappointment. To the lover's view, his whole path, from marriage onwards, seems covered with a glory; but the mortified husband often finds the vast radiance contract itself into a domestic rush-light.'

'And have women no disappointments?'

'Oh yes, Willoughby, plenty! The mistress, when the church has made her a wife, is as often, and as much, and more deceived. At the altar she imagines herself united to a man of warm affections, noble thoughts, and great protective power, one for whose head the church roof is scarcely holy cover enough; but she finds herself at home instead of all this, to have married a craving body of wants; shirts that want washing, hose that want mending, whims that want attending to, ailments that want poulticing, appetites that want cooking for, perverseness that wants bearing with, passions that want patience, and cowardly spirits that want comforting.'

'Yes! but all this is known beforehand.'

'Perhaps so; but it is not thought of. Commonly marriages are made in the heat of blood, and not in the strength of the soul; and so with the subsidence of passion evaporates the pleasure of union.'

'Well, if your friends, Francis, live in the spirit of what they have heard to-day, they will be happy together their lives through. It wants but attention, and for happiness, Master Asheton's sermon will then avail them manifold more than the bride's dowry, though that was handsome; and when proclaimed at the church door, appeared to astonish some of her father's friends.'

'That old custom, I wonder what was the origin of it? Old Leissach seems to be fond of old ways.'

'He seems to have a happy facility of being pleased, Francis.'

'He does, and it is to be hoped his daughter has; for it is a marvellous ingredient in married or any other blessedness. Some households are like horse-chestnut-trees; nothing less than a gale of excitement can stir the stiffness of their sullen dispositions; while others resemble the poplar, the leaves of which rustle all day with the sweetest music, quite ravishing at times, and that though blown upon by only the softest whisper of a breeze. Willoughby, didst see that man's face?'

'I did. There are a good many red-letter-days marked in it, certainly, and more perhaps, than the Catholic number, but it is an index still to a human soul.'

'To a treatise on vinous and other liquors, you mean.'

'I am afraid so, Francis.'

'However, Willoughby, it is legible, which many faces are not; for some are like blank leaves, and others resemble crumpled paper; they are so wrinkled, that no one line of meaning can be distinctly made out.'

'You are a physiognomist, Francis.'

'A hasty one, for so few countenances are worth perusal; most of them may be read as fast as met; for instance, on the pathway, that miser's face is an index to compound interest; that young priest's to the doctrine of probabilities, as applicable to clerical

vacancies, especially among the prebends and rectories of this diocese of London. Yonder fop's face is not an index, it is complete in itself, it is all he is worth, and there is nothing beyond. But look at this youth's: his is a countenance and an index to a soul worth knowing; a soul, which would seem to be in its turn an interpretation, and that not a feeble one, of a higher soul still, that of the world, as the Alexandrians used to think, or, as we say, of Nature. I like to see an expressive countenance, especially among my acquaintance, just as I like to have my books well bound and lettered, even such volumes as I never open; for when once you have read a book through, a good label on the back reminds you of half the contents at once; it keeps them in memory.'

'In other words, like other people, you like beauty.'

'I do; but I like something else still more. Look on the other side of the road, in the window: that is indisputably a pretty face, but painfully unmeaning. Yes! young lady! your smiles resemble nonsense-verses written in illuminated letters.'

'Well said, Francis! But we have reached our inn now.'

It was a fine day, and the streets of the city were thronged with people. St Paul's church was crowded with them that went to see, and them that went to be seen, with the news-seekers and the news-tellers, and in the side aisles, with them that

dealt in benefices, and them that were anxious to buy. Outside the church, also, gallants passed to and fro, exhibiting the newest mode of slashing the doublet in the arms and the waist, for the purpose of showing the shirt, which often was embroidered with scenes from history. The ladies, many of them had attempted to heighten their beauty with paint, the redness of which St Cyprian would have said, was a reflex of the flames predestined for them in hell. Among the serving men, there were some branded in the forehead with the letter S. in accordance with a recently enacted law, which empowered any person to seize on a poor unemployed stranger in a parish, to carry him before a Justice of the Peace, get him adjudged a vagabond, and branded on the breast with the letter V., and given then into servitude for two years; which if the convict ran away from, the master on capturing him again, was entitled to have him branded then in the forehead as his slave for life. At the corner of Ave-Maria-Lane stood an old soldier, miserably battered, singing an interminable ballad about the battle of Agincourt, every stanza of which terminated with the following couplet —

> 'Wot ye right well, that thus it was,
> Gloria tibi Trinitas.'

Opposite the western door of the church was stationed a man for the sale of Jack of Lent's Testament — a song against keeping Lent; the vender

shouting it aloud as the opinion of Master Tongue, a popular preacher at Paul's Cross, 'that Lent was one of Christ's miracles, which God ordained not men to imitate or follow, and that it was an unsupportable burden.'

After visiting different places in the city, and going past George Purbecque's house, Master Brandon and Sir Francis went to Paul's, and, as it happened, exactly at the modish hour. From St Paul's they went to a bookseller's in Paternoster Row, where, in the inner shop, Master Brandon sat himself down, while Sir Francis searched the shelves for such books as he wanted.

'The Elucidation of Anne Askew's Martyrdom — that I want,' said Sir Francis. 'Dr Bale's Death of Luther; Osiander's Treatise on Incestuous Marriages, with an Exhortation to Henry VIII. of England to put away his wife Catherine; the Golden Legend; a New Interlude and a Merry, of the Nature of the Four Elements, declaring many proper points of philosophy natural, and divers strange lands; Latimer's Sermons;' these I do not want. What is this little book concerning? 'A Godly Meditation of the Christian Soul, concerning a Love towards God and his Christ, compiled in French, by Lady Margaret, Queen of Navarre, and aptly translated into English by the right virtuous Lady Elizabeth, daughter to our late Sovereign King Henry the Eighth.'

'The title is as long as the book, Francis.'

'It is nearly, and so is this—'The history of King Boccus and Sydrake; how he confounded his learned men, and in the sight of them drunk strong venom, in the name of the Trinity, and did him no hurt; also his divinity, that he learned from the book of Noe. Translated by Hugo Campden out of French into English. Printed at London by Thomas Godfray, at the cost and charge of Dan Robert Salthouse, monk of St Austin's at Canterbury.'

'I thought it was some monkish legend; but what are you laughing at?'

'The pictures in this Ship of Fools. I will read you a verse.

> 'Thus is the church defiled with villany;
> And instead of prayer and godly orison,
> Are used shameful bargains, and tales of ribaldry,
> Jestings, and mockings, and great derision.
> There few are or none of perfect devotion;
> And when our Lord is consecrate in form of bread,
> Thereby goes a knave his bonnet on his head.'

Barclay is but a rough rhymer; these two last lines, as far as I remember, are the smoothest in the whole poem.'

'What is that German?'

'It is one of my country-folk from Culemberg. It is the Mirror of Human Salvation. Look at it?'

It was a little work of small quarto size, full of wood-engravings; the frontispiece of which, divided into two compartments, represented the perdition of the wicked, and the creation of Eve. The devils

appeared fleeing from before the heavenly hosts into the mouth of hell, the distended jaws of which were fringed with grisly hair, and set with teeth, tusks and grinders both. In the other compartment of the frontispiece, Adam was engraved asleep on a flowery bank, lying on his left side; while out of his right, from between two of his ribs, Eve crept; a venerable figure standing nigh, motioning her to keep silent.

'The woman was in Paradise,
For man a help-meet made,
From Adam's rib created,
As he asleep was laid.'

'Ha, ha!' laughed Sir Francis; 'Here is a copy of the Nuremburg Chronicle; the cuts of which are said in the colophon, to have been engraved by Michæl Walgemuth, and William Pleydenerviff; mathematical men and painters they call themselves; but they are philosophers, Willoughby, and satirists: for they must have believed most rigidly that circumstances make the man. Here, this man with his cap thrown back, scratching his head so carefully, represents the Trojan Paris, Helen's seductive lover, and here on different pages further on, he serves for Anastasius, for Thales the Ionian, for Odofred, and for Dante, the Italian poet. Oh, here is Theurdank.'

'Who is he?'

'It is an allegory; said to be the joint composition of Canon Pfintzing of St Sebald's at Nu-

remberg, and Maximilian the late emperor, who designed in this work, as also in the Wise King, and the Triumphal Procession, to celebrate, by the help of pictures and poetry, his father's glory and his own. Look at the woodcuts.'

'They are very beautiful.'

'"Catechismus; that is to say a short instruction into Christian religion, for the singular commodity and profit of children and young people. Set forth by the most reverend father of God, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury and Metropolitan.' What a quantity of pictures, and two of them by Hans Holbein! Thomas Raynald's Birth of Mankind; what is this about? Dedicated 'unto the most gracious and in all goodness, most excellent, virtuous Lady, Queen Catharine, wife and most dearly beloved spouse, unto the most mighty, sapient, Christian prince, King Henry the VIII.' These I do not want. 'The Prayer and the Complaint of the Ploughman; written not long after the year of our Lord, a thousand and three hundred.' Do you know the book?'

'It is long since I read it: but I was pleased with it when I did. I think it closes with a passage on clerical celibacy.'

'Does it? Here it is — 'Thus was Ragal's daughter wedded to seven husbands, whom the devil strangled. But Tobias took her to live with her in cleanness and bringing up of her children to thy worship; and over him the devil had no

power, for the wedding was made in God, for God, and through God. Ah, Lord! the people are far gone from this manner of wedding: for now men wed their wives for fairness, others for riches, or some such other fleshly lust, and Lord! so it proveth by them, for the most part; for a man shall not find two wedded in a land, where the husband loves the wife, and the wife is buxom to the man, as they should be after thy law of marriage: but either the man loves not his wife, or the wife is not buxom to her man. And this, Lord, is the rule of price, that never faileth to prove, whether it be done by thee or not. And, Lord! all this mischief is come among thy people, for that they know not thy word; but their shepherds and hired men feed them with their leasings. And Lord! where they should go before us in the field, they say that their order is too holy for thy marriage.' '

'It is a curious old work, Francis; what is that you have in your hand now?'

'Bale's brief chronicle of the examination and death of the blessed martyr of Christ, Sir John Oldcastle, the Lord Cobham. 'When the gospel lay dead, glorious Thomas Becket was a saint, and John Oldcastle a forgotten heretic; but now that the light thereof shineth, we are like to see it far otherwise: for proud Becket hath already hidden his face, and poor Oldcastle beginneth now to appear very notable. Not all unrightly did St Augustine speak it, and other old doctors beside; that

many were worshipped here in earth for saints, whose wretched souls are grievously cruciate in hell.' Of a new book, I generally look at the end first; for authors, if they have any light at all, commonly contrive to show a little toward the tail-piece, like glow-worms.'

'Well, so they do.'

'Prelates be so choked with tallow of worldly goods, and occupations about them, that they may not preach the gospel, and warn the people of the devil's deceit. Prelates make themselves most unable to keep the gospel of Christ, by their great business about rotten goods, and by pomps and boasts of this world, for they be most busy, of all men in the world, to get worldly goods by purchase, and to hold them by false plea. Oh Lord! what token of meekness and forsaking of worldly riches is this: a prelate, or an abbot, or a prior, that is dead to the world and pride and vanity thereof, to ride with fourscore horse, with harness of silver and gold, and many ragged and frittered squires and other men, swearing heart, and bowels, and nails, and other members of Christ?' On the blank leaf some one has written, 'Also the honour of a faithful minister mayest thou understand, gentle reader, in Dr Wickliffe's own words, 'good priests, who live well, in purity of thought, and speech, and deed, and in good example to the people, who teach the law of God, up to their knowledge, and labour fast night and day to learn it, and teach it openly and

constantly; these are the very prophets of God, and holy angels of God, and the spiritual light of the world.'

'Why, that is a manuscript volume you have now.'

'Here is a monkish hymn, Willoughby.

'Salve, Symon Montis Fortis
Totius flos militiæ!
Duras pœnas passus mortis
Protector gentis Angliæ!'

'I did not know that the stout earl had been canonized.'

'Nor could he have been, and that for two sufficient reasons; after confiscation, the family had no money to pay for the honour; nor would the government have allowed it; however they could not prevent the belief of some hundreds of miracles having been wrought at his tomb. The old Earl's is a curious instance of political admiration passing into saintly worship; and illustrates what some have supposed was the origin of Grecian idolatry.'

'This book I have been wanting long — Gregory Reisch's Philosophic Pearl, or an Epitome of all Philosophy. Doctorem secundum —'

'Oh, render it into English, Francis!'

'In the judgment of the Irrefragable Doctor, an Apostate is one, who wantonly recedes from the standard of faith, in ecclesiastical discipline or doctrine. According to Augustine, in his book on the

usefulness of belief, a Heretic, is one who originates or follows false and novel opinions, for the sake of some temporal advantage, especially if it be for his own glory or power. And in the opinion of St Thomas, a Blasphemer is any one who denies in the Godhead, what suits himself, or who attributes to the creature what is peculiar to the Creator; which if it be done out of wanton malice, is sin against the Holy Ghost and not to be forgiven; that is, it is not easily remissible; for according to St Augustine, the sin against the Holy Ghost, is more particularly final impenitence; and that is pardoned, neither here nor hereafter.'

'Excellent! What is the date of the book?'

'Fifteen hundred and eight. And now while I go and pay for these books, look at Hans Holbein's two woodcuts in the frontispiece of Cranmer's Catechism.'

They were very beautifully executed; and were illustrations of the first and the last petitions of the Lord's prayer; one was a picture of a priest, his head shaven and surplice on, kneeling at an altar, and praying, 'Our Father;' the other was an engraving of our Lord casting out devils, underneath which was inscribed 'Deliver us from evil.' After Master Brandon had admired Hans Holbein's work, he opened an old volume of William Caxton's, the English father of printing and of printed authorship also; and happened to read as follows: —

'O ye knights of England! where is the custom

and usage of noble chivalry, that was used in those days? What do ye now, but go to the bagnios and play at dice? And some, not well-advised use not honest and good rule, against all order of knighthood. Leave this, leave it; and read the noble volumes of St Graul, of Launcelot, of Galaad, of Tristram, of Gawain, and many more. There shall ye see manhood courtesy, and gentleness. I would demand a question, if I should not displease. How many knights be there now in England, that have the use and the exercise of a knight; that is to-wit, that he knoweth his horse, and his horse him? I suppose, if a due search should be made, there should be found many that lack. The more pity is.'

'And now come along,' said Sir Francis, 'I have a whim in my head, and I am going to attempt a conversion.'

'What?'

'I happen to know, that there is a man living in this street, a man of much worth, who is just beginning to fall into drunkenness. In my own peculiar way, I am going to attempt his recovery.'

'Now, this is one of your old'—

'No! it is not. From the look of the man, I know I shall succeed with him, so come, we shall see him on our way to the inn.'

'Excuse me Francis, but I am afraid, that you are drawing me into one of your old pleasantries.'

'No! I am not. And if my humour be a little fantastical, it is yet quite safe.'

Master Brandon agreed to accompany Sir Francis, and as they came opposite to a fishmonger's shop, they heard a man withinside say —

'The countryfolk, what do they know about these matters?'

'What is that you are saying, old Beelzebub?' exclaimed Sir Francis, 'Good day to you.'

'Beelzebub!' said the fishmonger, 'mine is as honest a calling as any within or without the city walls.'

'Beelzebub means king of the flies, and I dare say of the fly-fishers too.'

'I never heard that before,' said the fishmonger, 'and I do not believe it: but I do know, and so do you, as being a Christian, that St Peter, who was prince of the apostles, was a fisherman born and bred.'

'Well, well, what is the price of this fish? I shall not give you so much.'

'By St Peter, I shall not accept a farthing less. It is as fresh a fish as I ever handled; and has not been out of the water six hours.'

'I shall not give you the money.'

'Well, take it then at the groat.'

Sir Francis tendered a piece of gold, in payment saying, 'Two lies have you told about one fish. It is older than you say it is; and after swearing by St Peter, you have yet abated your price.'

'It is all in the way of trade, sir.'

'And perdition, master Rand: but give me my

change. Oh silver, silver, Judas money! Look at this bit of metal,' said Sir Francis, balancing a piece of silver on the tip of his finger.

'I know the man I had it from; it was from my host at the Tabbard: but it is full weight, I know.'

'Full! aye, diabolical weight, for some man has balanced his soul against it, and lost. There is not a piece of this money, but has been lied, and lied, and lied upon! It has been clipped by the scrivener, been coveted by the pauper, been squandered by the spendthrift, and been stolen by the cut-purse; the labourer has cheated to gain it, the tradesman has cheated to get it; and the merchant has cheated to use it; fidelity has been bribed by it, innocence has been seduced with it, and hardened wickedness has had it, in payment of wages. Oh, London, London! There is not among thy citizens, one coin of the king's stamping, but becomes, by the vile uses thereof, a Satan's token.'

'Money is money's worth, sir.'

'Ay, so it is! A sufficiency of money is service, is friendship, house, furniture, horse, wife, oxen; it is the title of marquis, earl, and duke; it is the victory in law-suits; it is love, good-living and honour. Ay, money is money's worth. It is trickery also; it is treachery; it is gluttony; it is perjury; it is lust; it is usury; it is oppression; it is contempt of the good and learned; it is pride; and salvation it used to be, but masses are not to be bought now. Look yonder! nigh the Hand and Glove, there is a priest

exchanging money with a soldier, twenty pieces of clerical hypocrisy for one military act of murder. Your money-changer's is a shocking business, it is a barter of crimes. 'Effodiuntur opes, irritamenta malorum.' Always let us look further than the outside of matters. We shall be obliged to be honest with God, both of us, within fifty years hence, so let us be honest with ourselves. Ay, I know what you are about saying; I know that you have an honest repute; so I have myself, I hope. But, notwithstanding that, we ought to look into our habits. If I am avaricious, let me consider what it is which I covet, remembering that often money is another name for mammon. We cannot be too circumspect in this present evil world; for, no doubt, you have observed, Master Rand, as I have often, that the devil entices men into a dance of pleasure, he playing the fiddle the while, and that he soon cunningly changes the tune into a dance of sin, and quickly into a dance of death, worse than my friend, Hans Holbein's, in the picture-book. You had this piece from the host of the Tabbard?'

'I had, Sir. It is clipped in the edge, but it is sound; ring it else.'

'So this came out of my host's gipsire, did it? It is payment for nine drunken fits. It is a token, besides, of the seven daily sins, for the drunkard incurs the guilt of them all. He is a thief, a blasphemer, a homicide, a liar, and an adulterer.'

'Your worship is not a priest,' exclaimed the fishmonger, 'or, mayhap, your reverence is one of the foreign divines.'

'Sobriety is a point of the law, the which, if a man break, he is deservedly to be held guilty of all; inasmuch as he wilfully renders himself liable to the perpetration of all sin. The path of destruction, Master Rand, is not out in the desert, nor outside Temple-Bar, but here in these streets, and in the courts and the alleys of the city. The pit of perdition is in every man's nigh neighbourhood, and the drunken presumption that ventures, on staggering past it, blindfold, whether it actually fall or not, has morally merited all the punishment of all laws, and will doubtless experience it.'

'Your worship, your reverence, I have known a man enjoy his cup three times a-week, these twenty years, and by good chance, never come to harm.'

'Trusting to chance is apostacy to God. Is not that harm, is not that damnation? Believe me, Master Rand, it is.'

'By St Peter,' said the fishmonger, 'I am resolved never — I think — yes! I never will —'

'Go beyond the second cup,' said Master Rand's wife, laying her hand on his shoulder, and looking, at the same time, into his face, with a sweet smile, and an expression of warm and hopeful entreaty.

'No! I never will go beyond the second cup, Bess; so help me St Peter!'

'And God,' continued his wife, who wanted from

her husband some stronger affirmation than his customary, but light oath.

'So help me God! I forswear drunkenness, and everything beyond the second cup, Bess,—Company's Dinners, Fishmongers' Hall, and everywhere till I die.'

'Oh, sirs, I know my husband will do it, for he says he will,' said Master Rand's wife, drying her eyes the while.

'Why, Bess, Bess! Elizabeth! How this has happened, I do not know: but, gentlemen, you and my wife together, I may tell you, have persuaded me into what poor Bess has been begging and praying for many a time, the last few weeks. Somehow or other I have promised, ay, sworn it, and that is well. And now you will walk in, and sit awhile in my house. I will thank you if you will honour me so far, and so will poor Bess — that is, my wife — I'm sure.'

When Master Brandon and Sir Francis Farel returned to their inn, there was acting in the court, and under the window of their chamber, 'Master Bale's brief comedy or interlude of John Baptist's preaching in the Wilderness,' the professed purpose of which was 'to open crafty assaults of the wicked, and the glorious baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ.' At the conclusion of the play, there was an epilogue spoken by one of the actors, standing in front of the stage, and which ended with these lines, —

'Give ear unto Christ, let man's vain fantasies go,
As the Father bade by his most high commandment.
Hear neither Francis, Benedict, nor Bruno,
Albert nor Dominic, for they new rulers invent.
Follow Christ's Gospel, and therein fructify,
To the praise of God, and his Son Jesus' glory.'

When the morality was finished, there were some few spectators applauded it very vehemently, especially five or six of the clergy, who were leaning together over the rails of the gallery, that led round to the different up-stair rooms; but the majority of the persons present appeared to dislike the representation.

'What! do you call this your new religion?' said one. 'It is a paltry concern. Why, in the old plays, there was more gold and silver, and silk, and learning, and more to laugh at, than in a score of these new comedies. Oh, the mysteries that I have seen in the old time, at St Luke's church, with half the priests in London all acting at once! Most Christian to look upon!'

'I tell you what, old Andrew,' said another, 'thou hadst better be quiet; for the priest of St Jude's is not far off, and he will not have thee abuse Dr Bale's play, for Master Dr Bale is his cousin; that I do know, for they were both born and bred at Covie, and their two fathers were nigh neighbours of mine.'

'Bale, a doctor!'

'Let me tell thee that he is spoken for as bishop.'

'Bale, a bishop! Bale, a doctor! Is not he a married priest? Answer me that. Do not tell me about priests having a law to marry. Have they a right? Hath it not ever been believed that the devils have more power over them, that have lost their virginity? Your new preachers, with their liberty, liberty, liberty! have caused our livings to be worse than be the Turks.'

'Ay, ay, neighbour,' said a third; 'one might ask the clergy at the window there — look! that one with the pot at his mouth has just presented five people that I know of, for forsaking his church; one might ask them what I heard Sir Serles ask in the pulpit at Ashford church — 'you fellows, of the new trick, that go up and down, with your testaments in your hands, I pray you what profit take you by them? Be these men more charitable, be they more learned, be they better ensamples?''

'Master Serles was none of your renegade priests. At Christ Church chapter-house I heard the sermon which brought him into trouble, and a right marvellous sermon it was against the preachers, which preach to you new fangles.'

'New fangles! Ay, ay, if it had not been for them, I should not have been what I am now. In the old times that were, many a time, painting missals, I have got, before breakfast, enough for a day's carousal; but your common prayer-books, who ever brings one of them to be illumined? And if men would, they dare not for fear of the law. But things

may mend again for us limners yet; they will be better times with us — ay, and with you barbers and fishmongers. They will be better times when the old religion has its rights again. And then we will have a law for the stricter observance of Fridays, and against any missals or breviaries being printed; but they shall all be written, as in the good old days, and so mend trade again.'

When the crowd was nearly dispersed, the clerk of the parish, an old man, solicited Sir Francis Farel for a contribution of money, towards defraying the expenses of the play.

'A very proper comedy!' said Sir Francis.

'And most excellent religion,' said the clerk, 'and very spiritually played; for the man that acted Pharisee, your worship, may have seen sometimes gospeller and epistler at St Paul's; and the Sadducee is priest at Trinity in Dasford; John Baptist was a Carmelite friar once, at Norwich, ay, along with Master Dr Bale.'

'But, sacristan, these new comedies do not pay you after the manner of the old ones.'

'You may say it; and it is my opinion that if the Pope and his most gracious Majesty could have settled matters otherwise than they did, that it would have been every way the better for us parish-clerks.'

'No doubt of it,' said Sir Francis. 'You clerks must have lost many of your old privileges.'

'Lost! privileges! We clerks have been a ru-

ined sect of men. Clerk-ales be poor concerns now; for men do not drink thereat, as they used to do, to the honour of the saints. And, then, every glutton-mass, my father used to get a matter of five shillings; for there was not a church, twenty miles round, in which there was as much and good eating, or as much ale drunk, as there used to be in St Chad's. People used to go, miles and miles round, to feast at it, and the priests and friars of half the county. And a proud day it was for Sir Winchester among them, for there were no parishioners any where could honour the glutton-mass like his. Well, and then there is the money lost, I used to make by the sale of holy water, especially in stormy weather, or after a ghost had appeared in the parish. Your worships would not believe the time, that I have sold in, all the priests had blessed, and paid him the money fairly, and been praised and done well by myself the while. Well, and then, if there were a score or a hundred masses wanted saying, I undertook the matter, and was well rewarded for it; for there was not a clerk in the city could get a hundred masses said in a shorter time than I could; I having acquaintance among all orders of the spirituality, and knowing well among them who were the fastest, and the surest, and the cheapest mass-sayers, and the trustiest. Well, then, there were the friars' girdles I used to sell; and the very last I ever sold was to Mistress Quickly at the Saracen's head, against Lent, for her

wearing then; a profit, that was of five pence, for it was friar John's once — a right famous preacher, and fat, a portly and goodly man to look upon. And then sin-eating, there is none of that now. Before I was made clerk, I was often a sin-eater; that was not in the city, that was in Kent; and when a yeoman's corpse, or an esquire's, has been bringing out at the door, many a time have I had a round sum to take on myself the dead man's sins. Once I had half an angel; for old Taltub was a desperately rich and wicked man; but I went and confessed myself at once, and got absolution, and vowed (I think I did) a trifle to St Nicholas, and I was a gainer then of three shillings and ninepence. All this was in the old time, and old times will never come over again, till we parish-clerks remember St Nicholas. No trades have been prosperous since the patron-saints were abolished; it is for want of St Louis's help that the barbers be so distressed; the swineherds and grocers, how should they prosper, when there is not a shrine of St Anthony's in the whole country perhaps. Men say that this age the lawyers be waxed wickeder than ever, and what wonder, since they now never pray to St Yves! Oh, this generation! There is my Lord Stratton, a despiser of the blessed saints, when he himself would never have been a lad, much less a man up-grown, if his mother, my lady, had not had him weighed at the blessed shrine of the blessed St Thomas, and thereupon offered his

weight in wax, the best that could be got for the martyr; and by his blessed help it was, that the young lord recovered. I was living in Kent at the time, now forty years agone. Ah, well a-day, your worships, well a-day! Good den to you. Well a-day!'

Thus ended the parish-clerk's lament, immediately on the termination of which, Master Brandon and Sir Francis Farel returned to Harborne House, which Sir Francis left, the day but one following, at an early hour of the morning, in order to embark in the Liebe Frau, a good ship of that name, and so christened by a citizen of Rotterdam, in honour of his wife.

CHAPTER XII.

Aid, glorious Martyrs, from your fields of light,
Our mortal ken! Inspire a perfect trust,
While we look round, that Heaven's decrees are just.
WORDSWORTH.

JOHN STRYPE, the chronicler, writes, that in the year 1548, there were 'heresies vented abroad, as the denial of the Trinity, and the Deity of the Holy Ghost, and the assertion, that Jesus Christ was a mere man, and not God, because he had the accidents of human nature, such as hungering and thirsting, and being visible; and that the benefit man received by Jesus Christ was the bringing them to the true knowledge of God.' 'There was one John Asheton, who preached these doctrines; who, on the twenty-eighth of December, was summoned to Lambeth, to appear there before the Archbishop, when John Whitwell, the Archbishop's Almoner, and Thomas Langley, both priests, and his Grace's chaplains, exhibited a schedule of diverse heresies and damned opinions against the said Asheton, which are recited in the abjuration which he made. The tenour whereof is as followeth:—

'In the name of God, Amen. Before you most

learned Father in God, Thomas, Archbishop, Primate, and Metropolitan of all England, Commissary of our most dreaded Sovereign Lord, and excellent Prince, Edward VI., by the grace of God, &c., I, John Asheton, priest, of my pure heart, free will, voluntary and sincere knowledge, confess and openly recognize, that in times past, I thought, believed, said, heard, and affirmed these errors and damnable opinions following: that is to say, 1. That the Trinity of persons was established by the confession of Athanasius, declared by a psalm *Quicunque vult*, &c. And that the Holy Ghost, was not God, but only a certain power of the Father. 2. That Jesus Christ, that was conceived of the Virgin Mary, was a Holy Prophet, and especially beloved of God the Father; but that he was not the true and living God; forasmuch as he was seen and lived, hungered and thirsted. 3. That this only is the fruit of Jesus Christ's passion: that whereas we were strangers from God, and had no knowledge of his Testament, it pleased God by Christ, to bring us to the acknowledging of his holy power by the Testament. Wherefore I, the said John Asheton, detesting and abhorring all my said errors, heresies, and damned opinions, willingly, and with all my power, affecting hereafter firmly to believe in the true and perfect faith of Christ, and Holy Church, with a pure and free heart, voluntary mind, will, and intend utterly to forsake, relinquish, renounce, and despise the said detestable errors, heresies, and

abominable opinions; granting and confessing now, that the blessed Trinity consisted in three distinct persons, and one Godhead,' &c.

Alas, Master Asheton! And, alas, also for Dr Cranmer! For he remembered not the Scripture, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' Seven years after Master Asheton's trial, at the palace, did Archbishop Cranmer himself recant, not once only, but six several times, confessing that he 'was the cause and author of the divorce: which fault, indeed, was the seminary of all the evils and calamities in this realm: hence so many slaughters of good men; hence the schism of the whole kingdom; hence heresies; hence the destruction of so many souls and bodies spring, that I can scarce comprehend with reason.' 'Wherefore I do most earnestly and ardently beseech the Pope, that he, for the mercy of Christ, forgive me the things which I have committed against him and the apostolic see.' Humiliating as was Master Asheton's recantation; more ignominious still was the wording of Archbishop Cranmer's, — 'that thief of the gospel comforts my mind; for then at last he repented, from his heart, then it irked him of his theft, when he might steal no more,' — 'that happy thief,' — by the example of this man, I do conceive no small hopes of Christ's mercy, that he will pardon my sins.'

'Heart of oak hath sometimes warped a little in the scorching heat of persecution. Their want of true courage herein cannot be excused; yet many

censure them for surrendering up their forts after a long siege, who would have yielded up their own at the first summons. Oh, there is more required to make one valiant, than to call Cranmer or Jewel coward; as if the fire of Smithfield had been no hotter than what is painted in the Book of Martyrs.' These are Thomas Fuller's words; and if they do contain any extenuation, then let Master Asheton share in it along with Archbishop Cranmer. However, the fact may not be disguised, that John Asheton subscribed his hand to his confession, 'before the Archbishop, exhibiting it for his act, and lifting up his hand, beseeched his Grace to deal mercifully and graciously with him; and touching the gospel, gave his faith that he would faithfully and humbly obey the commands of the Holy Mother Church, and whatsoever penance the said reverend father should lay upon him.' He recanted his religion; and then all within and without him was changed; thenceforth the wide world seemed to narrow itself around him into a penitential cell; the glories of the firmament appeared to concentrate themselves into the severity of an omnipresent Eye: his once free state of mind became self-accusing, his existence one long consciousness of sin, and his prayers day and night, a helpless iteration of 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'

The life that is saved by sin is not worth saving.

'In the life of Sir Thomas Smith, Strype records,

that 'an ecclesiastical commission, in the beginning of this year 1549, was issued out for the examination of *Anabaptists* and *Arians*, that now began to spring up apace, and show themselves more openly. Sir Thomas was one of this commission, (for he was much employed in the matters of religion,) jointly with the Archbishop of Canterbury; Thirlby, Bishop of Westminster; Dr May, Dean of St Paul's; and Dr Cooke, Dean of the Arches, who sat in judgment upon divers of these heretics, in that part of St Paul's Church commonly called the Altar of our Lady.' The same historian, who records the institution of this court, records also, as one of its transactions, the condemnation of Jane Bouchier for Arianism, in St Paul's Church, April 1549. Many means were employed to persuade her to recant her opinions. Latimer had interviews with her, and Lord Chancellor Rich was entrusted with her, as a prisoner guest. Month passed away after month; summer wore away, and then autumn, and then the winter; but the Confessor's constancy resisted the power of time as well as that of man. It might have been thought in April 1550, that she had recanted; but it was known to be far otherwise, one evening in spring, when there was gathered together a vast multitude to witness her execution in Smithfield. One large, bright star shone upon the crowd, with its soft, full light; and as the evening darkened, other less stars began first to twinkle, and then to shine out steadily in the blue

firmament. Suddenly they were obscured by a dense smoke, in which sheets of flame shot up; and in a few instants a fire roared aloud, and blazed, and towered higher than the roofs of neighbouring houses. The multitude the while pressed on one another, and shouted together in savage glee. Boys standing on their fathers' shoulders caught a fiendish tone from the fierce cries round them; innocent children were brutalized by that horrible delight in which they shared; not a few men, by then rejoicing in iniquity, came afterwards to perpetrate iniquity: and there were women there, the stains on whose once pure souls, were deepened and fixed by contaminating contact with a multitude joying and gloating over the agonies of a fellow-creature.

Clergymen stood on one side of the fire, arrayed in surplice and square cap; and, on the other side of the stake, were stationed officers, armed with pole-axes. Between the clergy and the officers, there was a pile of reserved faggots, on which sat the public executioner, his head resting on his hand, and his blood-shot eyes riveted on the female, whose form was just discernible in the flames. The sufferer held her hands clasped together, and stood with her face turned upwards. Soon her head was seen to decline on to her breast, and then her body slowly bent forwards on to the blazing fuel; seeing which, Dr Berdrobs doffed his cap, and holding a reformed prayer-book in his hand,

was about chaunting *Te Deum;* but he was hindered by the priest of St Michael's, who ordered the spectators to 'hurrah for the church;' whereupon the priests, and the commonalty shouted together, the officers brandishing their axes aloft; however, Dr Berdrobs kept silence, for he was much angered by the priest of St Michael's.

Often the greatest events are unknown as such during their occurrence; it has happened that angels have been entertained unawares in human tents; and though the Deity is everywhere present, yet they are only the angelically pure in heart who see him. Many of the glories of the spiritual world men are blind to through prejudice. In the death of Jane Bouchier, the surrounding crowd discerned only the death of an enemy, but she was not their enemy; and there was an Eye, not that of man, that beheld above her the heavens opened, and her spirit mounting thitherwards, Elijah-like, in fire.

And behold a throne was set in heaven, and one sat thereon, and there was prostrate before the throne a soul, newly come from earth, worshipping Him that liveth for ever and ever. The spirit, indeed, trembled with an agony worse than martyrdom, for it was the first hour of her disembodied being; and now she was to be judged by Him, of whom she had heard, that his angels he charged with folly. Doubts thronged her mind, but she strengthened herself with this great thought — 'God

so loved the world, that Christ also died for us.' There was silence. Then a regenerating power passed through her spirit, and a voice said, 'Come thou blessed of my Father.' And when she arose, there was assigned her a white robe, as having been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which she held. The glorious company of the apostles, and the goodly fellowship of the prophets stood near her on either hand; and beyond and around were the noble army of martyrs; and there was joy in the presence of the angels, when there was produced from among the treasures in heaven, that crown of martyrdom which had been laid up, for the Lord, the righteous judge, to give her at that day.

It was before the mind of Heinrich Saltzburg, that there passed a vision like what is written above.

Thou mourner for the dead! Often dost thou go sorrowing after thy virtuous friend into the churchyard, but he is not there, for he is risen — a spirit now among the just made perfect. In his coffin there are only grave-clothes and a decaying body, which, indeed, when living, was never more than a garment of earth. Be thou tranquil, since, in place of a worn-out body, thy lost companion is now clothed upon with immortality! Nay, nay, do not weep such bitter tears. Look on the newly-made graves, and see on them how the flowers spring up again more luxuriantly than before. So ought thy

hopes to prise up the more strongly out of sorrow; and not only to spring up on high, but also to blossom there, and ripen those consolatory fruits which drop down into the soul, like manna from heaven.

Oh, thou sufferer for righteousness' sake! Thou canst nowise walk uprightly but by treading now and then in a martyr's steps; but do thou take courage, for this present evil world is but a small speck on the brightness of God's infinite dominions. To live in it is Christ, and to die from out of it, is gain.

In the year of Christ 1550, there came from Mayence, to reside at the factory of the Hanseatic League in London, George Van Paris, a cousin of Sir Francis Farel. Like Sir Francis, he was in his faith an Arian, and from his youth upwards exemplary for piety and beneficence. At the time of his arrival, there raged in London a bitter controversy concerning consecrated garments and churches. Some of Dr Cranmer's disciples expressed their hatred of Popery, by irreverent usage of churches, by idling therein, and by hearing common prayer, and sometimes the sermon, upon horseback. Van Paris ever exhibited, even on the Exchange, a more reverent demeanour than did these innovators at their worship. His voice was sanctified by his religion, in the same manner as it was softened by his benevolence. There were persons who were solemnized by the unaffected tones of that merchant's voice, more blessedly than attendants at

church sometimes are by the prayers and homilies of surpliced priests. With most men, religion is only a hebdomadal intermittent; but it was not so with Van Paris. On his desk, there always lay beside the ledger a Martin Luther's bible. Their contact there was not inappropriate; for the spirit of Van Paris was not divided against itself, with the mercantile and the religious feeling dwelling far apart, separated by a jealous partition of self-interest. His pious affections indwelt and blended with his business habits, so that he traded more religiously than many merchants pray. Many times in the day would Van Paris open for a minute his German bible, and that without any violent transition of feeling, for it was not like passing from the worship of mammon to the service of God, but rather it resembled St Paul's frame of mind, who thought over Christian affairs while busied at his trade of tent-making, and who, in his mind, prepared epistles to the churches scattered abroad, working with his hands the while, that he might be chargeable to no man. It was a beautiful union in Paul, that of the apostle and labourer, but now the two are divorced, and they are both the worse for the separation. Religion is grown cold and stately, by her close confinement in gorgeous cathedrals; and the routine of the workshop is become brutish and comfortless, for want of such conversation as that, with which St Paul was accustomed to encourage Timothy and other his fellow-labourers.

Van Paris brought his family with him to England, all the members of which were beloved by him, with that deep affection which only the pious ever feel; for religion not only worships God the Infinite, but it pervades, with an infinite tenderness, all the other affections of the soul, whatever be their objects, whether woman or children, or fellow-man, letters, science, or art. The greatest glories of this world are unknown to most of its inhabitants. There is many a blind man's dwelling, which mid-day regularly fills with light, which sunset often gilds with the richest gold, and over which and around which the stars of the firmament keep nightly watch, every one of them, every instant, visiting the house with their far-travelled light; but the poor occupant never perceives it. The infinite heavens are around his dwelling, and heavenly influences stream through it day and night; but to him they are as if they were not: but more pitiable still than he, and innumerable are the families which, through religious deficiency, live all unconscious of the profuseness of their spiritual wealth.

'The natural man perceiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' He envies the occupancy of turreted mansions, the strength of ducal residences, the splendour, height, width, and furniture of king's houses — envies them painfully; whilst these all, and more than these, are his own. The tower up-

springing from the castle's roof — it is not in insensate stone, nor in the mortar, that majesty resides; but it is in the beholder's own self. Nay, it is scarcely too much to hold that there is no beauty inherent in statuary, but only such an apt fashioning of the marble, as awakes in the beholder his own latent sense of excellence. Sublimity and grandeur, sweetness and beauty, are not properties of matter, but of the spirit only. Michael Angelo's paintings are more properly ennobling than noble; they are not themselves beauty, but occasions of beautiful feeling. In like manner, luxuries are but contrivances for awakening in the possessor's mind the feeling of comfort; wealth is chiefly valuable for exciting in its owner the sense of competence, otherwise gold might as well be dust; and all external objects, all that is not ourselves, the goods of fortune, the achievements of art, the size and convenience of our houses, are valuable only in proportion to their pleasurable effect upon the mind. Now, the mind is excitable not only by matter, but also by spirit; by thought as well as by sight; by the medium of prayer as well as by observation; and not only by human works and natural productions — objects from without, but also from within — by the reception of the Holy Spirit, God, all in all. Confidence in a strong castle as a dwelling-place, the rich man's joy in his abundance, the wealthy man's pleasure in his beneficence, blessing a whole county at a time; the sublimity of the Alps, the

loveliness of Devonshire, the rejoicing beauty of the river Rhine, nay, the grandeur of Infinity itself — these are all feelings of the human mind; and if in any person they lie latent, for want of stimulants from without, they, or feelings nobler than they, may be excited from within, God's grace aiding our human endeavours; for it is the office of the Holy Ghost, to communicate to the souls of its recipients a feeling of the sublime more awful than the sight of high mountains, and a perception of moral beauty more delicate than painting ever pourtrayed. As writes the apostle, 'the wisdom of the spirit is life and peace,' for contentment is greater wealth than the riches of Ind; faith in Providence a happier security than a moated tower; and a vivid idea of God is an ever-abiding presence of glory in the mind, more satisfying, more blessed than a legally guaranteed possession of all the splendours that man's art, or labour, or wealth have ever created. Through the gospel, we are happy altogether, rich, noble, inspired, and more than conquerors. As it is written, 'He that is spiritual discerneth all things.' The inhabitant's mind makes of every house what it will — a place of punishment, wherein his ungoverned passions are his tormentors, by day and night, — a peaceful home, — or a church even, as one of the ancient fathers teacheth, 'Make thy house a church! Where there are souls that love God, and songs and prayers, there is the church; and if there be but a man and his wife,

God is among them, and there is a vast congregation, for Christ and his angels are present.'

With many men their own dwellings are the most monotonous of all their resorts; but it was not so with Van Paris: for if he had been any while absent, he never entered his house without more solemn emotion than many priests have felt in returning to the altar. God may be most solemnly worshipped at church as the Creator of the world; and whilst kneeling under a high roof, beside a supporting pillar, or nigh the chancel and in presence of the altar, men's feelings may be thrilled with more than usual awe, by the reverend words and bearing of the priest, and by strains of solemn music; but it is at home, with children's happy voices within hearing, with fears for them and for ourselves awake — it is in the midst of a family that God is best experienced as the Father Almighty. Religion pervaded Van Paris's heart, and the hearts of all his family; it enhanced their interest in one another unspeakably; it sweetened their intercourse, and every void and want of their spirits, even in the youngest, it filled with all the fulness of God. Seldom did a Levite kindle between the horns of the altar a fire more emblematic of religion than what commonly burned on Van Paris's hearth. The head of a Jewish family had often occasion to offer up a pigeon, or a measure of oil, on the altar at Jerusalem; but such offerings as these, or even of a he-goat from the

fold, or a bullock from the stall — these were not so acceptable with the Deity as those which are made at the fireside — sacrifices of self, acts of forbearance and kindness. Van Paris and his wife Justa were one flesh; indeed, they were more than all, which that strong old phrase expresses. Very great was the regard of Van Paris for his children; it was love heightened by a something of reverence: for he knew that the Divine Voice invites children, and that infants often hear it whilst old men are deaf with the sleep of the world: and so Van Paris entertained towards his children love, joy, and solemnity — a feeling not unlike that fondness which Elkanah may have had for the child Samuel, after the Lord had called him.

As mentioned before, in the reign of King Edward the Sixth, controversies were very general and very bitter, on the holiness of churches and vestments, of certain ceremonies and particular seasons; but Van Paris surveyed these matters from a higher point of view than either the Papists or their opponents; for he knew and felt that to the holy all things are holy.

The universe is a temple; soil, turf, and sand, are its tesselated floor. Its altars are the high mountains; for decayed tombs, it has ruined cities; and for monumental inscriptions, the histories of Greece and Rome, Egypt and the tribes of Israel. The due season in which all creatures are satisfied with meat is an anthem to Jehovah, which swells

on the plain, and is re-echoed from the mountain. In this cathedral of nature, it is always full service and sermon; never since man had ears to hear has the homily been omitted. It is but little heeded, else what an instructive sermon is preached daily from one end of heaven to the other. The argument on worldly worthlessness, every syllable of it is shaped out of some mortal's deadly disappointment, every word is fashioned out of some sinner's dying groan, and there is not a sentence of it but is a rich man's doom. Ah, what a sermon is that for the measurement of which not only the hour-glass, but the very earth itself is turned round!

But a life spent in this spirit is not possible in the world, without martyrdom of some kind or other — sacrifice of reputation and social prospect in a greater or less extent, loss, perhaps, of the dearly prized opinion of good but misjudging men, or it may be even of life itself. This last and greatest sacrifice Van Paris made.

'George Van Paris,' writes Neale, in his history of the Puritans, 'being convicted of saying that God the Father was only God, and that Christ was not very God, was dealt with to abjure: but refusing, he was condemned in the same manner as Joan of Kent, and on the 25th of April 1551, was burnt in Smithfield. He was a man of strict and virtuous life, and very devout; he suffered with great constancy of mind, kissing the stake and faggots that were to burn him.'

CHAPTER XIII.

Even such is Time, that takes on trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with age and dust:
Who in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days!
But from this earth, this grave, this dust,
My God shall raise me up, I trust!

SIR WALTER RALEIGH.

IN the year of our Lord 1551, and on the thirtieth of May, that is on the festival of St Felix, pope and martyr, Sir Francis Farel had been some time arrived from Mayence, and was sitting with Master Brandon, who said, 'My medicine? Give it me, Rachel — ugh — there — now take the cup, and away with yonder phial, good sister!'

'Which you do not like the sight of, I think.'

'Why, Francis, I do not dislike it much; but such things as those, I have removed systematically. The sight is not cheerful; for in one's throat it prolongs the taste of the physic. Once only I have to die, and I have wished for calmness wherewith to observe and think to the better purpose. Now death does not disturb me; indeed these many years, in thought, prayer, and other ways,

have I familiarized myself with its approaches; but there are some of its accompaniments I cannot so well endure — I mean the mournfulness of attendants, the lamentations, and, it may be, the shrieks of women, visitors' half evident surprise at finding you still lingering on, the growing array of empty phials, looking like a growing testimony against tenacity of life; and then the oftentimes heartless visitations of the priest, as though it were his clerical office, if not to serve, to read the writ of mortality, and that in a formal, unpleasant way. I say, these things I should feel as annoyances, and I avoid them therefore; not as suggestions of death, but as being in themselves molestations, and especially so in my weak state. 'Pompa mortis magis terret quam mors ipsa.' I thank God, Francis, that you are with me, for yours is natural piety, and therefore cheerful; and in a long illness one wants comfort, and comfort few visitants of the sick can give, for their religion is mostly unreal — a lengthening of the face, a lugubrious tone, a forced, uneasy feeling assumed at the very door. They minister their consolation as though it were medicine, without ever having tasted it themselves.'

Verily the sick room does detect the impotence and imposture of artificial religion; for in the ears of a man who has lived without faith, the very words of Christian comfort can sound but like sentences of death, since only he who has lived Christianity can die it; and to such a one, with his sensibilities

perhaps painfully quickened by illness, there is nothing more revolting than to hear religion unworthily discoursed — it is profanation, it is like weakening one's faith, it is a tarnishing of the fine gold of hope. Oh, the soulless manner in which so many officious visitants intrude their consolations on the sick! — 'We must all die — death comes sooner or later — no doubt it is all for the best — perhaps you may recover yet.' Comfort, like this common-place, is as repugnant as a proffer of the parish pall. Do not molest a sufferer's ears with empty, unfelt phrases; for affliction is a solemn message from God; and if the recipient thereof has only a vague feeling of its spiritual purport, at least do not lower that by an intermixture of your own earthliness. Nigh death, especially, silence has a meaning; do not thou break it, unless thy words have a better.

Too commonly the attendants on a deathbed are physicians, superstitious nurses, formal priests, lawyers with their untimely business, or, at the best, relatives with their weak but distressing lamentations; with every one of whom probably religion is a mourning-cloak, and not like the daily robe of a child of God, and of a sombre look, instead of showing inwrought into its texture the happiest recollections of earth, intertwined with the brightest hopes of heaven. In the hour of death, would that every righteous man might have a fitting attendant, a Christian, with whom perfect love has cast out fear — a companion of youth — one with happy tones in his voice

—a friend, with light in his countenance, wherewith to dispel from the deathbed that gloom, which belongs not even to the grave rightly!

'Oh!' said Master Brandon, 'I accept your presence as a special mercy, vouchsafed to me by God.'

'Willoughby, dear Willoughby!'

'A beautiful day this is! So worn and weak as I am, is it not marvellous that my sensibilities should be so acute, and preternaturally so, at times? It is therefore, that I have these fresh flowers every day, those plants, that bird, and that new shelf of books labelled with those spirit-stirring names. I say I have all these cheerful objects round me.'

'Cheerful,' exclaimed Sir Francis; 'that martyrdom of St Agnes ——'

'—— is not melancholy?'

'Indeed, Willoughby, it is very beautiful.'

'And, Francis, the virgin's face! What an expression it is of intense faith—faith that is all but actual sight! Oh, I gaze and gaze upon that face sometimes, till I forget those executioners in the back-ground, and those other painted terrors, and my own pains themselves; for it is as if I looked with the saint's own eyes into futurity, and discerned there things unspeakable. Often have my nerves thrilled with the ecstacy of that painted hope, and my bosom swoln with the very joy that dilates in the virgin's person. Look at it, look at it! Is not faith more than the shadow? Is it not the substance of things hoped for?'

'It is indeed a painted interpretation of the text — exposition, argument, deduction, proof, exhortation, all concentred in a look. Verily, on saving faith there is not a doctor of the Sorbonne, no, nor of Wittemberg either, who could put forth a sounder exposition than this by Da Vinci.'

'But, Francis, in my severer pains I have my couch so placed that I can look upon that crucifixion. Praying to the Father Almighty, with the vivid impression of that picture on my mind, my body in an agony of suffering the while; have I then understood the blessed meaning of mediation between God and man — felt it, as it is not to be felt while sitting comfortably underneath a pulpit, nor indeed any where else, while in health and enjoyment. Oh, it is in affliction, in pain, in what would otherwise be the soul's darkness — it is when the wide world feels like a torture-house that the Son of God is truly precious; it is when this garment of flesh clings and burns like a poisoned tunic, that one blesses Christ that he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham. The Prince of our salvation consecrated through affliction — it is that consecrates us — life and death made welcome by his having participated with us. We are reconciled to Providence in its mysteries, by the sight of Christ in our flesh.'

'Willoughby, I wish that you would write out those new thoughts or views which your sickness may have occasioned you. They might be made

very useful. Why is that dry leaf kept withinside the glass?'

'It contains a chrysalis; my sister found it in the summer-house, and now, like myself, it is waiting here its appointed time, until its change come.'

'The Greek use of the chrysalis, as an emblem of hope in death — that is intelligible enough, and very happy; but in the catacombs at Rome, and commonly among the Christians of the second and third centuries, what a fish could symbolize I never could conjecture; for certainly something more must have been meant than Christ's allusion to the prophet Jonah's having been three days in the whale's belly.'

'And truly, so there was.'

'I thought there must have been. What was it?'

'Fish in the Greek ιχθυς; and that, an anagram composed out of the first letters of Ιησοῦς Χριστος, Θεοῦ Υιος Σωτηρ — Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world, by his resurrection after a three days' death. To the initiated, to the early Christians, all this was implied by the two curves, in which they drew the outline of a fish. It was one among the many devices in which they sought to give public utterance to their faith, veiling it the while in emblems, unsuspected and inscrutable by Pagan eye.'

'Very curious; and an instance, Willoughby, of the manner in which the primitive believers made

so many customs and objects significant of religion.'

'And therein,' said Master Brandon, 'imitating nature, which is herself suggestive; nay, to the spiritually-minded, she is predictive, prophetic in many, most of her arrangements; for instance, in her structure of those insect-cells, which seem like coffins, but which are birth-places, is there not inwrought a hint of what may be the nature of the human grave?'

'There is. As a young man, I used to think such intimations were chance-truths; but I am convinced otherwise, the more I know of Providence and the ordained works of my own nature.'

'Francis, you are right; and for a dying man, I do believe that the observance of a chrysalis is more Christian, than daily contemplating a skull, like the Catholic brotherhood of St Paul. With them I am not connected, as you may believe, nor I believe would St Paul himself have been, inasmuch as he belonged to the College of Apostles, one of whose members has written that 'perfect love casteth out fear, for fear hath painfulness; and he that feareth is not perfect in love.' God is judge whether in love I am perfect; but blessed be his grace, fear I have none. No, no! I have not that torment.'

'Willoughby, what ails thee? Thou art ill — oh, worse!'

'The pain in my breast — no, no — only be quiet

a short while. Oh, the body of this death! Thy will be done on earth, in me, as it is in heaven.'

After some minutes, Sir Francis stepped lightly to the window, to draw the hangings before it; but Master Brandon said, 'No, Francis, no! I was not asleep, but was striving to pray myself into forgetfulness of pain. Now, I am quite comfortable. Oh, Francis, in this earthen tenement of mine there are many fissures; it is but a ruinous habitation, and sadly convulsed by life's inward struggles at escape. 'Fashioned like unto his glorious body'—it is in sickness, or at seventy, that these words have a meaning; not at school, nor during manly vigour, nor in the grace of early womanhood. The flesh — synonyme for frailty, vice, and suffering for lusts and aches, covetousness and hunger, sleeplessness and cough — oh, I could rail upon it, like a Gymnosophist or a Gnostic, only that through its organs and its network of nerves I have been clothed upon with knowledge, and also with virtue, I trust.'

'Willoughby, you are better, I think.'

'Yes, I am free from pain; free from the body, let that be when God wills. Christian deliverance is from sin, the world, and the body. Translation has never been a Christian hope; but with the Jews, I fancy it has been a favourite notion.'

'So the Talmud would argue.'

'You remember any of those rabbinical legends — then, tell me one, Francis.'

'Listen, then, to that of Jehoshah Ben Levi. The last evening of his old age, the Rabbi sat in his oratory, and read the law, which having finished perusing, the angel of death appeared, and announced the close of his life, but informed the aged master in Israel, that on account of his exceeding righteousness his requests were all to be granted; whereupon Jehoshah Ben Levi demanded sight of paradise before death. Then, swift as thought itself, he was carried into infinity — this earth's light dwindling down to a size of a diamond — an intermittent ray — and then into invisibility. Towers of gold, he saw, and mountains of diamonds, their lofty sides covered with emerald forests, each one as wide as ten worlds. Next, the Rabbi asked to behold Abraham's palace; and here Gabriel's messenger of death was outwitted, for Jehoshah Ben Levi having been placed on one of the towers, leaped thence into Paradise — of all his earthliness, having parted only with the skirt of his robe.'

'Thank you. But the legend of my episcopal namesake, St Brandon, conveys a grander idea of Paradise than your Talmudist does. Instigated by a vision, St Brandon and his monks voyaged forth. After perils by sea and land, during a space of six years, the pilgrims discovered at last, from a mountain-top, the sweet beginnings of Paradise — a glorious and most ravishing sight!

> 'But they were crushed with joy, 'Return,'
> Said they, 'We may not this sustain.'

Emperilled themselves six years for that joy, and then in their human weakness turned away from its intensity. So delicate an imagining! So beautiful a thought! It is a pity the author should have been forgotten.'

'Dear Willoughby, it is a very touching conclusion, and one proper for us all to rest in.'

'I would, I could remember the lines, in which the pilgrim-monks were made sensible of their incapacity to comprehend heavenly bliss.'

'The reserve maintained on the joys and employments of heaven is a most remarkable characteristic of the Scriptures; a caution which betokens their authenticity, for bliss too intensely anticipated has an enervating effect, as was the case with the mystics. For myself, there are seasons wherein contemplating celestial blessedness, my wonder, as it were, strains itself into doubt. My faith fails me, on account of my unworthiness. That feelings and thoughts worthy of heaven, — angelic raptures — that already the elements, the germs, the beginnings, of these glories are existent in my spirit is what I do not feel; it is what I can trust, but it is not what I am assured of.'

'And well for you, Francis; for earthly assurrance soon degenerates into presumption. One might well doubt, nay despair of heavenly felicities, were they to be of our own unaided making; and were fitness for heaven to be one's own unassisted acquisition, one might distrust the possibility. But

the Holy Spirit is to be believed in, not only as a present help, but as an indwelling source of eternal strength — a perfecting power within us. And as to the magnitude of the change, that surely is conceivable by any observant spectator of nature. Look out of the window, at the garden.'

'It is very, very beautiful,' said Sir Francis.

'It is so; but last Christmas, what was it?'

'Desolate enough, Willoughby, no doubt.'

'It was; and yet nearly all that you now behold, was at that time existent under the soil. There lay latent in the black clods of earth all the gracefulness of those plants, the shady foliage of yonder elms, every flowery perfume, the lusciousness of the grape and the strawberry, and all the colours of the rainbow, those of the rose, the polanthus, the daffodil, the daisy, the violet, and the acanthus, together with the sweetness, and the attractiveness of the whole scene.'

'Very pretty, and perhaps true enough for what you want to infer. What is it?'

'Three months' sunshine and rain have fostered out of dead earth all yonder beauty and abundance: but rain and sunshine — what are they as agents, compared with holy influences, like those, which the Father Almighty can exert upon man's soul! Oh! there are persons, whom we have known, Francis, whose spirits divested of the numbing investiture of the flesh, they in God, and God in them — concerning whom, no magnitude of glory would seem incredible.'

'We have indeed known such.'

'Yes, Francis, and know them in this earth; although this earth is but a state of infantile seclusion, manifestly so; and our circumstances are adapted to the spiritual weakness of this earliest stage in existence; for all the sources of knowledge are half hidden away from us, are veiled over, lest the intensity of exterior influences should hinder the soul's formation from within, or worse than hinder, ruin it; since there was not only mystery, but profound wisdom, in the ancient opinion, that no man could see God and live.'

'We acknowledge the wisdom that veils heaven from our earthly view; yet fain would we prefigure heaven to ourselves in intelligible, that is, in earthly colourings. Oh, it is a state, is it not, the ordinary tenour of which, will be like the splendour of principalities and thrones; a state of love tenderer than that of the apostle John, and wherein the meanest of our motives shall be as mighty as that which impelled St Winifred into Friesland; a contemplative state, in which the commonest of our thoughts shall be as vast as the idea, of which York Minster is the embodiment, and as sublime also as the genius, of which the Divina Commedia is the unfolding. And yet, and yet — one cannot but feel unworthy this; and sometimes I half wish, that I could have died after some such actions as ——'

'There are depressed seasons,' answered Master Brandon, 'in which we look back on the heights of

our past heroism, on the monumental instances of our disinterestedness, and we doubt our competency to the like actions again; but such misgivings should not distress us, since this very modesty is the medium of strength, for 'God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.' If the will have been kept pure, whatever we have achieved once, we are more than equal to again. Believe in the Holy Spirit, and mountains of temptations are moveable, and heavenly heights of morality are possible, yes, certain. You repeated to me once, some very striking lines on eternity; they were Latin, I think.'

'Eternitas! Eternitas?—It is an ancient and favourite hymn upon the Rhine, especially at the Holy City.'

Hereupon, Sir Francis Farel recited the Rhenish hymn, of which the following is C. F. Coxe's English purport.

Eternity! Eternity!
How long art thou, Eternity!
Yet onward still to thee we speed,
As to the fight, th' impatient steed,
As ship to port, or shaft from bow,
Or swift as couriers homeward go.
Mark well, O man, Eternity!

Eternity! Eternity!
How long art thou, Eternity!
As in a ball's concentric round
Nor starting point, nor end is found;

So thou, Eternity, so vast,
No entrance and no exit hast.
Mark well, O man, Eternity!

Eternity! Eternity!
How long art thou, Eternity!
Came there a bird, each thousandth year,
One sand-grain from the hills to bear;
When all had vanished, grain by grain,
Eternity would still remain.
Mark well, O man, Eternity!

At night, Master Brandon retired to bed, being apparently stronger than during many previous months; and his cough had quite ceased. Now, in the visions of the night, when sleep fell upon him, it seemed to him as though he were in a churchyard, and that there he read the gravestones, beside one of which he sat down to meditate amid the sunshine and the stillness. And there entered into his mind the spirit of fleshly unbelief, doubting and saying—'But how, but how are the dead raised up, and with what bodies come they forth?' Then the green graves sunk level with the ground; the whole churchyard was changed into a desert of dust; and on the face of the clock, instead of fingers, there became visible the ancient symbol of eternity. There ascended, then, from the ground a mist, that thickened rapidly, and it hid the sun and the sky from sight; the air grew heavy with chains of darkness; and round Brandon there was perceptible a loathsome presence, which was, as it were, of lying prophets: and being in a horror of distracted-

ness, he sought refuge withinside the opened door of the church. Now, there lay upon the altar an ancient Bible, the leaves of which were turned over one after another, as though with the wind; and while on the holy pages all else was illegible, there gleamed brightly, through the darkness, the illuminated names of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs; believers, whose saintly memories shine like the stars, for ever and ever; and the church was filled with light, and along with the light, returned Master Brandon's self-possession, and therewith also hope, faith, and joy. And beholding the inscription upon the altar-piece, he read it and rejoiced in it; and it was — 'We know in part, and we prophecy in part.'

From this dream, may one understand, that Scripture is its own evidence, and its own interpretation; as also, that its pages are to be read in the light of human nature — that is, by remembering the while what human life is, what human virtues, human wants, and human sufferings are. The *argumentum ab ignorantiâ* is absurd enough; but absurder still, an unbelieving conclusion from ignorance: reasoning, such as this, has denied not only the resurrection of the dead, but even any certainty of the present existence of the living.

Now, when Master Brandon was falling asleep a second time, he said within himself, 'Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' Then it seemed to the sick man

that a voice asked, 'Is the victory indeed given?' Then he exclaimed, 'Oh, God! is it not, is not this victory granted me?' No voice answered; but an inward persuasion, as it were an influx of the Spirit, bore witness with his spirit that he was a child of God. Then Paradise was open before him; but he could only endure to look upon the gates of pearl, and on them only askance, for the light withinside repelled his mortal vision; sound, sight, air, all existence was instinct with an unearthly joy. While the vision was dissolving away, he felt the pressure of a hand, and he heard these words — the very lines, which the day before, he had vainly endeavoured to recollect.

'Oh, Brandon, God unto thine eyes
Hath granted sight of Paradise.
But know, it glories hath more bright,
Than e'er have dazed thy mortal sight.
One hundred thousand times more fair
Are these abodes. But thou couldst ne'er
The view sustain, nor the ecstacy,
Its meanest joys would yield to thee.
For thou hast in the body come;
But when the Lord shall call thee home,
Thou fitted then — a spirit free,
From weakness and mortality,
Shalt aye remain — no fleeting guest,
But taking here thine endless rest.'

While Master Brandon lay entranced in this dream, his sister Rachel bent over him, for it was morning, and she had approached his bedside unheard. There were tears in her eyes, and one of

them she could not prevent falling on her brother's brow, whereupon he awoke. Mistress Rachel then kissed him, and said, 'Surely, brother, you are mended this morning; but I am sorry to have awakened thee, for thy sleep was sweet; oh, I know it was, by your smiling so softly; for it was exactly as when a child is said to talk with the angels. But, indeed, dear brother, you are better, I do think.'

Master Brandon answered that he was altogether free from pain, but that he accepted that, as no symptom of convalescence; and holding his sister's hand, he pressed and kissed it.

In the afternoon, the day being the Feast of St Pernella, Sir Francis Farel read Erasmus' Colloquy on the Apotheosis of John Reuchlin; Master Brandon sitting upon a day-couch, nigh which stood a table, covered with neatly arranged papers and flowers, and with books, some of them being significant signs of the times; but the majority were suggestive of that state, in which time shall be no more — A Little Book, necessary and behoveful against the Pestilence — A Compendious Regimen or Dietary of Health, made in Montpellier by Andrew Boorde, of Physic, Doctor — The Church of Evil Men and Evil Women, whereof Lucifer is Head — A Preservative against the Poison of Pelagius, lately resumed and stirred up again by the

furious sect of the Anabaptists; devised by William Turner, Doctor of Physic — A Godly and Faithful Retractation, made and published at St Paul's Cross in London, by Master Richard Smith, Doctor of Divinity, and Reader of the King's Majesty's Lecture at Oxford; revoking certain errors and faults, by him committed, in some of his books — The Craft to Live well and to Die well — The Dying Creature — The Information for Pilgrims unto the Holy Land; that is, to-wit, to Rome, to Jerusalem, and to many other places — The Profitable Book for Man's Soul, and right comfortable for the Body; which book is called, The Chastising of God's Children — The Dietary of Ghostly Health — A Short Treatise of Contemplation, taught by the Lord Jesus Christ; and taken out of the Book of Margery Kemp of Lynn.

'What is this?' asked Sir Francis, holding a manuscript in his hand, 'Commune with your own heart, upon your bed and be still.'

'Oh! it contains my meditations, which I wrote upon All Souls' Day.'

'*Self-communion for the Dying* — shall I read it, Willoughby?'

'Yes, Francis, you may; and will you read it for me aloud? Oh! I have such peculiar sensations, very pleasant though. Now read, Francis.'

'1. Do not distress thyself with doubts in death; religious perturbation thou mayest feel — thou hast felt it before; remember then the universally

peaceful end thereof. Under heavy affliction, man imagines that surely delight is vanished for ever; the elements of existence feel as though dissolving round him; and the pillars of the temple of life seem sunk out of sight; whereas they are merely hidden by the smoke of the sacrifice, which, when completed, the atmosphere seems the clearer, and is really the purer for. For the dark hour of death, then, faith is the only, and it is the rightful feeling.'

'The allusion, Francis, is to nervous misgivings, like that distrust of God, which, with some persons, is only disordered health.'

'2. Scarcely more able to stir than a corpse; thy bed, in imagination, narrowing into a coffin; the clothes upon thee, through weakness, feeling as though they were straitened into a shroud; and to thy failing eyesight, thy chamber dreary as the narrow house; sick, dispirited — remember still that thou, in thy personality, thine essential self, art a departing soul, and not a dying corpse.

'3. What is death? It is a momentary stage in a lengthened process, that commences with a slight quickening of the pulse, and which ends in a handful of dust, in one corner of a coffin. It is a succumbing of the material frame to the laws of matter; but from these laws of matter the soul was created exempt; nay, it is the ordained peculiarity of spirit, to exist as an exception to the mechanical necessities of nature; and thus, with Christian boldness, may we infer from the freedom of the will, the

immortality of the mind. Whilst thou art free to think, think therefore in peace.

'4. Death was yesterday and the day before; it was last year, and it is now, this moment; so that expiration is a departure for life, and not from life.'

'You smile,' said Master Brandon, 'as though that last sentence were an attempt to cheat one's self with euphuisms like a Greek; but read it again, for it is not so; and if it were, it would be but right; for how many grand truths are deformed by inappropriate descriptions! and the spiritual meaning of life — how much of it is obscured by verbiage! To a Christian, there is no such thing as death — that is, in the common meaning of the word.'

Sir Francis resumed as follows: —

'5. Were a youth to behold in a prophetic glass his own figure as a man, sudden transformation into it, would appal him like death; so that in death, it is the mere brevity of the change is the terror of it.

'6. It is human inexperience of death, not death itself, which is frightful. Think what Adam's horror of darkness must have been, when the sun set for the first time; and then bethink thee, that if the Sun of Life goes down behind the Grave, it is westward, and the only way for his re-appearance in the Eternal East of youth and glory.

'7. Remember the mysterious feelings of anticipation and awe, with which the years were once

regarded, which separated thy own childhood from thy grandfather's grey-haired and solemn age; and though thou hast thyself been conducted a shorter path through life; yet, bethink thee, that thou art now where he was then, and where he is, that thou wilt thyself soon be. Life here and hereafter is a continuousness of being; infancy, youth, manhood, and marriage, are each one a stage therein, and death is no more.

'8. Suffering, an ingredient of mortal life, an ordained means to spiritual perfection — let no novel experience thereof, in the day of death, appal thee; but let the novelty of the form become suggestive of the purpose: for in sorrow did our mothers bring us forth; it was amid repentant agonies and awe unutterable, that we were born again; and the anxieties of a mortal sickness — they are the birth-pangs of an immortal life.'

'What must be, must be,' said Master Brandon. 'Oh, there is an irresistibly tranquilizing power in the basilisk eye of Necessity, and especially when death fixes it upon a man; for it draws into one and to itself, all the feelings of the heart — and that one, unquestioning acquiescence.'

'9. Think of the loveliness of nature, some sweet scene, which thou hast rejoiced in unto tears; the vale of Habberley, with its sweet, soft air, its high hill-sides, beautiful with sunlight and shadow, its solemn stillness, its woods and their protective, venerable look; and think, that thou art thyself going

into the life-giving bosom of Him, who is the pervading presence thereof.'

'Joy in nature, Francis, is implied affinity with the Creator. In Grecian history, it is written that Apelles recognized the artistical relationship of Protogenes, through sympathy with one line of his drawn with chalk upon a board. But how many myriads of lines there are, traced by the Almighty, on the surface of creation, and intelligible only by man! The perception of each one of them being a prophecy of sonship to the Creator — an outward corroboration of the inward spirit of adoption; both of them testifying alike, Abba, Father!'

'10. The world, I trust that I am already dead to; my years and once vigorous undertakings live now, only in the book of God's remembrance; this body's passions, which day by day I denied for years — the reward thereof is among the treasures of heaven; the strength that was formerly in my movements, purposes, and joys, has now only a withholden existence in the Divine hand; and of my relatives and companions, the larger portion are dead. The vigour, the fruits, and the friends of life, nay, life itself, 'is hid with Christ in God;' the entirety thereof, a little hard breathing excepted. This painful remainder — Lord! that I might yield it up in peace.'

'Amen. Lord, in thy time, in peace!'

'11. Vanity of vanities! Life were mere vanity, only that man knows and feels it. Is the soul so

great that earthly circumstances limit it like a prison-house ? Then infinity is indeed its destined freedom.'

Here Master Brandon clasped his hands, and said, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again into a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' This blessed, blessed hope ! Stop, Francis. It is a minor evidence of immortality, but a very peculiar one — I mean the book of Ecclesiates, throughout the twelve chapters of which, there is felt such a prolonged dissonance — the clashing together of high intellect and deep despair, a worse moral than any musical discord, and one the very sounding of which is its own confutation. Belief in a hereafter is the key-note of nature, and to alter it, is to confound the harmony of the universe. I have always loved that book of Ecclesiastes, ever since early childhood — there is something so touching in its ancient melancholy. Now, will you read on, Francis ?'

'12. When going the way of all flesh, remember thou the hope of all spirits. Comforting it is to know, that immortality has been believed in these fifteen hundred years of Christ, and before Christ, trusted in by whole nations, and by individuals greater than nations, by Socrates, and Plato, and Tully. Oh, at the thought of heaven, the instinctive hopes of the human race are like the fingers of

a multitude of clocks at noonday; their agreement, if not the standard of truth, is at least one test thereof. Nor let it be concealed, that there have existed doubts of a future life, in certain peculiar minds, since these also testify to the truth; just as on the sun-dial, it is the shadow that betokens the hour.

'13. Remember in death the book of life — the two Testaments, the Ancient one so triumphantly annulled by the New; and the New sealed by Christ's so precious blood'——

'Aye, and to joy therein the more; let us remember therewith Plato's Dialogue on the Immortality of the Soul! Oh, it is less than the least of the prophets; beautifully worded, its distinctness very delicately drawn, speculative, poetic — still, however, as means of consolation, trust in the Phædo, is but like a Tuscan poet's singing-robe, compared with Scriptural aids, the shield of faith, the breastplate of righteousness, and the helmet of the hope of salvation.'

'14. In death, remember the myriads of the living. Thy chamber may be dark, but the sun shines on; thine earthly interests are narrowed to the width of a tomb, and the length of the road that leads to it, but the earth is itself as wide as ever; thy pulse is low, but the great heart of nature throbs youthfully still; and in thy limbs there is a trembling, but the many-membered human body, of which thou art a component part — omnipotence is

still the strength thereof. In thyself, then, and in others, death is not so much the failure, as it is the fulfilment of life.'

'It is preached sometimes,' said Master Brandon, 'that we fall like ripe fruit from the tree; and so we do, Francis; but the similitude would not be very comfortable, if one did not also reflect, that the ripe apple on falling, contains in itself seeds of another life, and that a longer than its own summer one.'

Here Sir Francis Farel rose from his seat to render a little service to Master Brandon, which having performed, he resumed his reading as follows: —

'15. Death is the bursting of a bubble on the sea of life, a trifle, the disappearance of one person out of a thousand millions of people; a disconnected, common, unnoticeable thing. — Is it? Verily, no! In the mind of an arithmetician, a solitary death may be insignificant enough, but in the eye of Almighty God, it is otherwise. Is it a dejecting thought, that this deathbed is but a miserable hand's breadth in the extent of England, Europe, the world, and infinitely less still on the face of society, past and present? Yet, mere spot as it is which I occupy, there converge upon it, providential lines from all quarters and of all ages, and their concentrating point is in my heart; which, indeed, if not of stone, ought to be all faith. God decreed that thou shouldst die no savage and idolater like thy hea-

then forefathers; but a Christian, a Protestant, and with the comforts of competence, friendship, and literature around thee. Now, thy attainment of property — was it not contingent on the happening of certain events, which, for their causation, depended, on other prior circumstances, and these, in their turn, were they not dependant on preceding incidents; and thus indefinitely backwards: and each one incidence has perhaps a dozen contributory causes. Oh, the multitudinous chains of cause and effect, which stretch from my dying person, away into the remoteness of antiquity! — spiritual bonds between myself, and the men, and the events of foregone generations; John Wycliffe's Lollardy at Lutterworth; the landing of the first Christian in England; the conversion of St Paul; the churches of Corinth, Ephesus, Galatia, Thessalonica, and their internal troubles, through which Paul's letters were drawn forth and published, and so ultimately read by thyself; John's surviving the other evangelists, and thus writing his Gospel, as a supplement to their three; the greater and the less prophets, their lives and their prophecies; Solomon's wisdom, and his authorship of the book of that name, and also of Ecclesiastes; David's harp, to the music of which Psalms were indited; the summit of Mount Sinai, whence the new commandments were given; the ark in which the infant Moses lay among the bulrushes on the river's brink; the call of Abraham, and the concomitant promise

now fulfilling, that in him 'shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' I lay my hand upon the Bible, and I feel, that out of its two thousand pages, not one could have been written differently, without a difference in the world's history, and in my own life. — In like manner, eight hundred years ago, after an eight days' fight on the plains of Poictiers, the Arabs would have conquered all France, but for Charles Martel's soldiership, and if France had become Mahomedan, so would England, and London like Grenada, would have been unchristianized; in Paul's Square there would have been a mosque instead of a church; instead of the year of our Lord, this would have been the nine hundred and thirtieth of the Hegira; and instead of the Bible, thou wouldst in death have been trusting in the Koran. In the success which made Charles Martel, mayor of the palace of Neustria, was mysteriously involved not only his honour, but thine own Christianity. — And thy power to reason thus, was it not very much contingent on the working of John Guttenberg's first printing-press at Mayence? Since, but for typography, thou couldst scarcely have found in a whole county, and then only with immense toil, the many religious and historical works, which thou hast now assembled about thee, in one room. And these favourite authors — their influence on thy mind was it not contingent on the manner in which their own minds were formed, their reading, and their early homes; which circum-

stances also were dependent on other preceding incidents. John Wycliffe's studies, day and night, in Leicestershire; the early waywardness and subsequent conversion of Augustine; St Paul's theological education under the Rabbi Gamaliel; the tenderness of the home in which St John was reared, beside the lake of Galilee: in all these circumstances hast thou a predestined interest, inferior only to that, which the agents had themselves. In one sense, all things in all ages have been thine. Oh, indeed, reasoning from the dependence of one event upon another, and the great upon the trivial, there has not been an age of the world, nor a vicissitude in any generation, but thy existence has visible or secret connection therewith. Nor among kings of the earth, among patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, among fathers of the church and philosophers, has there existed one of eminence, but in his life was implied thy own life. A man's person may be lost in a crowd; but from connection with society rightly understood, the soul should derive not the sense of littleness, but that of vastitude; not the fear of being forgotten before God, but the faith which feels that, before Abraham was, it was itself forethought of. That of personal unworthiness is a right feeling; but it ought not in death to be a distressing one, since no believer confides in his own importance to attract the divine notice; for it is not in what he has himself done that he trusts, so much as in what has been done

for him — that providential arrangement of spiritual laws through which 'all things are yours, whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death; whether they be things present, or things to come, even all are yours, and ye Christ's, and Christ God's.''

'Amen, Amen!' exclaimed Master Brandon. 'O the completeness and the joy of Paul's argument, when fully understood! The decisiveness, the triumph of his logic! To lay manifest the heavenly importance of the soul, each individual soul; surrounding worlds, and principalities, and powers, life and death, ages and authorities down-trodden before it in homage! or rather summed up together in all their wondrousness, and then pronounced the mere ministering agents of the soul, its servants, its property! Oh, even as the Almighty himself pervades the world and the world's history, so would he appear mysteriously to have linked us, along with himself, to the powers of nature, and to have made us also 'every one members of another.' Oh, no, no! 'None of us liveth to himself, neither doth any die to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore or die, we are the Lord's.''

Sir Francis asked Master Brandon whether he needed anything, and then resumed reading —

16. 'What have been the blessed seasons in which thy faith in heaven has been the firmest?

Have they not been those angelic hours, wherein jealousy and vindictiveness have been struggled against successfully, when a persevering enemy has been forgiven, and a repentant one been aided; those occasions wherein thou hast reconciled the disputant, and gladdened the poor, and devised pleasantness for the sufferer? Therefore, in the prostration of nature, to quicken thy faith and hope, vivify thy charity. Recollect what wrongs thou hast had to endure, and in such recollections certify thyself that there be no surviving bitterness; remember thine enemies, and one by one pray for them; bethink thee also concerning the needy of thy neighbourhood, and meditate in what manner thy dying aid may help them. Forgive, and thou shalt feel thyself forgiven; do the doctrine, and thou shalt know that it is of God; make earth around thee happy, and above thee heaven will become the brighter.

'17. Gratefulness — hast thou not experienced that, as a strengthener of faith? Oh, have there not been joyous seasons, when thou couldst have willingly died of gratitude — midsummer-days of warmth, and beauty, and plenteousness, of hope, health, and friendship, wherein every breath was full of solemn joy, when in every flower there seemed to lurk a mystical intimation of heaven, and in which an anthem was the most spontaneous of words — those greater saints'-days of life, when God's altar seemed so beautiful, that the sacrifice of soul and body thereon would have been

made as a reasonable and an eager service? In yielding up thy spirit, therefore, to invigorate thy trust in the Disposer of Life, call to mind the blessedness of life — thy sainted mother's caresses, the confidingness and the peace of thy early home, foretoken of 'the rest that remaineth,'—the ecstacy of the first conscious glance of thy betrothed, the felicity of life-long friendship, and the oftentimes exquisite pleasure of beneficence. Yea! remember the love and the enjoyment of love, of which thou in a perishing body hast been made susceptible. Warm thy dying heart with gratefulness, and then of itself it will thrill into a rapture, the last sensation of which shall be that of subsidence into Infinite Beatitude.'

'Yes, dear Francis!' Master Brandon said, 'It is from the end of life, that the excellencies of life are so plainly perceived to have been divine beckonings of us to a higher state. Often and often to me, and instinctively, has an innocent pleasure felt like a foretaste of infinite delight, an antepast of heaven. Nor can I believe otherwise, than that pure happiness is of a purifying effect; like Jewish bread from heaven, no doubt, it is meant to invigorate as well as gratify. The light, in the face of Jesus Christ, was that of the knowledge of the glory of God; in the countenance of Moses, it was that of the divine presence in Horeb; and the love which is in the faces of our friends — shall a dying man not interpret that also, as Affection smiling encouragement upon him, from out of that power

in which he and they, and all men move and have their being. As I remember St Thomas Aquinas writes, that God has it in his power to make not only words, but things, significant. It is thus, at least, that I will think of my friends and their kindness, and of this home of mine and its many comforts. St Augustine's thanksgiving, I make it mine — 'O Wisdom, most delectable light of the purified spirit! Never dost thou cease to beckon us, what and how great thou art; and all beauty in thy creatures, is but a manifold beckoning of them unto thyself.' Pardon my interruptions; but, indeed, I have quite tired myself with talking this afternoon: and now, will you read on, dear Francis?'

'18. In the last hours of life, remember that thou art not companionless; for in the neighbouring town, and in every city of every kingdom, agony for agony, weakness for weakness, breath for breath, there is brotherhood with thee; but the brotherhood that has a suffering earth for its extent, has and must have a rejoicing heaven for its home.

'19. In death, remember Christ — how, interpenetrated by his spirit, thy soul was born again, and, blessed token thereof, calamity itself counted all joy, — how, through him, the forms and the vicissitudes of nature have in thy sight grown significant of a holier philosophy, than that anciently so called, — how, upon this earth, thou hast been shown the Father, and amid earth's disorders and darkness, it hath sufficed thee. Of Christian prayer,

and Christian comfort, and Christian ideas of duty, hast thou not experienced the blessed efficacy? Life, as far as it has been life, hath it not been through Christ; and death, is not that the sure coming of Christ? Amen. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

'20. And in the last hour, when the blood retreats to the heart, then let thy consciousness withdraw from this outer into the inner, the everlasting world of virtue, truth, and beauty, and into the thought of God, which is the centre, the citadel, the stronghold thereof.'

Here Sir Francis looked at his friend, and thought him asleep; but Master Brandon opened his eyes, and said, 'That is all, Francis, is it? Francis, you are going — oh, I thought you were. How soon it is night! I am so weak — raise me up, do — there, there — fetch my sister — no, no! do not leave me, do not — give me your hand, dear Frank — have I? Then I cannot feel it. Lord, receive my spirit — my spirit — my spirit?'

And with this utterance of its name, the spirit went forth.

It is the vigil of St Sixtus the Martyr this evening; and here the writer hereof lays down his pen, makes of his chair a *venia*, and listens to the prayer of an ancient father of the church, mentally adapting it meanwhile to his own case — 'Domine Deus! quæcunque dixi in his libris de tuo, agnoscant et tui; et quæ de meo, et tu ignosce, et tui.'

NOTE

BY A DOCTOR IN THEOLOGY AND LETTERS.

The preceding pages have both merits and faults. The translated poetry would appear to have been quoted from Blackwood's Magazine, C. F. Cox's German Hymns, and the translation of D'Aubigne's History.

It may be presumed that the author of this volume thinks, with an acquaintance of my own, that a youthful imagination is employed about the church in filling up a saint's niche, or in painting a window, better than in bewildering itself and the world about the keystone of the arch, which, indeed, was let down from heaven, and was not raised up from earth, and which heaven meant that man should worship beneath, and not aspire to stand upon. Exactly what this means I do not understand; and that my friend himself does not, I would wager my doctoral cap against a bottle of ink. But let these poetic divines defend one another. These following are the words of an Oxford author of imaginary

dialogues: — 'What more can be said of imagination than that without it no man can be a deep theologian? And what is theology but the mother of the sciences, out of which depends every bright chain of human thought and knowledge, and into which they are again gathered up?'

FINIS.

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